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Security In The SME Space

Attacks Are Declining, But Hackers Are Out For Profit

by Steven S. Ross

• • •

Ask IT managers at a small to midsized enterprise what the biggest security problem is, and their answers will wander all over the technology map: employee access issues, meeting regulatory requirements, phishing, spam, accommodating VoIP, protecting data in transit and in storage, wireless communications.

Symantec's latest Internet Security Threat Report, released in September, says that the number of security attacks is actually decreasing. Annual surveys by the Computer Security Institute and FBI since 2001 report the same downward trend. But hackers these days are not the weird hackers of old, out for a lark at your expense. Today's hackers are increasingly likely to be trying to steal from your enterprise and from your customers.

Aspirin Won't Work

The No. 1 headache, SME security managers say, is employees who don't protect their own systems before connecting to the organization's network. Unauthorized hardware and software on their machines is the easiest pathway for a virus to enter the enterprise network. "The fact is that the network perimeter is no longer around," says Gleb Brichko, marketing communications manager for ForeScout Technologies, a firm that sells security appliances. "You always have contractors and salespeople who travel in and out of the office."

The No. 2 headache: Bosses who overreact to reports about DoS attacks or hacking of databases to steal customer account information. Those issues are real. In fact,

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Anatomy Of A Data Center Fire

How They Start, How They Spread & How To Detect Them Early To Avoid Catastrophe

by John Brandon

• • •

In a perfect world, data center fires would never occur. The cabling under the floorboards would never require maintenance, server temperatures would never exceed acceptable limits, and a perfectly designed office space would match the company-defined fire prevention guidelines. And yet, for a vast majority of data center managers, preparing for disaster is part of the job. Short of running fire drills every week, the more you prepare for disaster the easier you can recover.

The first step is in understanding how a data center fire starts in the first place. According to Mark Lillycrop, CEO at Arcati, a company that analyzes data centers, managers should trace potential problems back to the original data center design. "It's important that steel is used instead of wood where possible and that no flammable substances are used or stored within the machine room area," says Lillycrop. "This may seem obvious for purpose-built data centers, but if existing buildings are converted into data centers, it can be a significant issue."

The first step is in understanding how a data center fire starts in the first place.

Another analyst, David Hill from the Mesabi Group, says

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COVER FOCUS

Top SME IT Concerns

What are your top IT concerns? And, more importantly, what can you do about them? We give you strategies and tools to address IT issues related to security, VoIP, storage, wireless, and networking.

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Is outsourcing truly paying huge dividends for businesses that have embraced it? Are the captured savings greater than the challenges of managing culturally different workforces located far away from company headquarters?

Upgrading To Office 2003 | 29

Typically, the reasoning behind an organization moving to Microsoft Office 2003 goes beyond the user desktop into the enterprise environment. Drivers such as improved document security and collaboration top the list for SMEs wanting to make the move to Office 2003.

Outfitting Overseas Business Travelers | 30

IT departments have to equip executives, salespeople, and other business travelers to be productive when they're on the road. Above all, that means they need to enable them to communicate abroad as if they were at their usual offices.

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■ **BrightTools** added several enhancements to its Activeworx security information management software. ■ **Citrix Systems** launched the latest version of its Citrix NetScaler application delivery product line. ■ **DataCore Software** has announced an update to SANmelody 2.0 to offer iSCSI users a range of SAN features and network storage appliances. ■ **Fujitsu** released the Java technology-based Interstage Business Process Manager 7.1. ■ **Lenovo** has unveiled the ThinkVision C400 Wireless Projector with integrated 802.11b/g and USB memory key input. ■ **Reflex Security** introduced the Reflex IPS MG.

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1. What is the size of your company (how many employees)?

- ☐ Less than 10
- ☐ 10 - 99
- ☐ 100 - 199
- ☐ 200 - 499
- ☐ 500 - 999
- ☐ 1,000+

2. How often do you purchase computer hardware/software?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Bi-Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Annually
- ☐ No Involvement

3. What is your annual computer hardware/software purchasing budget?

- ☐ $0 - $9,999
- ☐ $10,000 - $24,999
- ☐ $25,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $99,999
- ☐ $100,000 - $249,999
- ☐ $250,000 - $499,999
- ☐ $500,000 - $999,000
- ☐ $1,000,000+

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New York, N.Y.
www.brainstorm-group.com

Business Rules Symposium Series
November 2-3
New York, N.Y.
www.brainstorm-group.com

Nearshore & Offshore Outsourcing Conference Series
November 2-3
New York, N.Y.
www.brainstorm-group.com

Service-Oriented Architecture Conference Series
November 2-3
New York, N.Y.
www.brainstorm-group.com

FS/TEC
November 6-9
Grapevine, Texas
www.fstec.com

Philadelphia ITEC 2005
November 9-10
Philadelphia, Pa.
www.goitec.com

SC2005
November 12-18
Seattle, Wash.
sc05.supercomputing.org

CSI Computer Security Conference & Expo
November 14-16
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Visit *Processor* at Booth #1010

IP 4 IT
November 14-16
Las Vegas, N.V.
www.ip4it.com

Government Technology Conference Southeast 2005
November 15-17
Atlanta, Ga.
www.govtech.net

ProjectWorld Conference & Expo
November 15-18
Orlando, Fla.
www.iirusa.com/projectworld

Government Video & Technology Expo
November 30-December 1
Washington, D.C.
www.gvexpo.com

- DECEMBER -

Search Engine Strategies 2005
December 5-8
Chicago, Ill.
www.jupiterevents.com

InfoSecurity
December 6-8
New York, N.Y.
www.infosecurityevent.com

WiFi VoWiFi Planet
December 6-8
San Jose, Calif.
www.jupiterevents.com

Portland ITEC 2005
December 7-8
Portland, Ore.
www.goitec.com

ITC East
December 13-14
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Interop Fall
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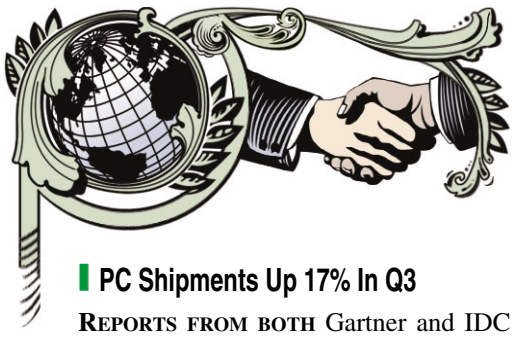
MarketPlace NEWS



PC Shipments Up 17% In Q3

Reports from both Gartner and IDC show that worldwide shipments of PCs rose by more than 17% in the third quarter. Gartner's research shows 55 million units shipped in Q3, a 17.2% increase from last year; IDC reported a 17.1% increase with 52.8 million units shipped in the quarter. According to Gartner, Dell continues to lead in worldwide PC shipments with a 16.8% market share (9.2 million units shipped); HP was in the No. 2 spot with a 15.2% market share (8.4 million units shipped). Lenovo (7.7%), Acer (4.7%), and Fujitsu/Siemens (3.8%) round out the top five vendors. Acer showed the most growth (54%) among the vendors in the quarter.

Windows Patch Causes Problems

Microsoft posted an advisory on its Web site warning that a critical patch it issued recently to fix security flaws for vulnerabilities in Win2000/XP/Server 2003 may cause serious problems. Installing the patch may prevent certain applications from installing or running, empty the network connections folder without users' permission, stop the Windows Firewall from starting, and even lock users out of their computers altogether. The problems seem to occur only in cases where default permission settings on a Windows directory have been changed, Microsoft says.

IT Spending Increase

Gartner predicts that IT spending in the United States will increase by 5.5% in 2006. Spending in the areas of security and storage is expected to slow, while spending for mobile devices such as Treos will increase. IT departments will also invest more money in software development tools and middleware. According to Gartner, companies will also increase their IT budgets in 2006; organizations with fewer than 100 employees could see as much as a 7% IT budget increase, while organizations with between 500 and 900 employees may only see a 2.4% increase.

Google "Good Works"

Google is starting to give back some of the windfall it made through revenues and its initial public offering last year. The company is setting up Google.org, a new organization designed to support charitable work, specifically focused on the issues of poverty, energy, and the environment. Google will fund the organization with 1% of the equity from its IPO and 1% of its annual profits. The organization's first benefactors included Acumen Fund, which received $5 million for antipoverty and healthcare works in the third world; a Kenyan research project, which received $400,000 to improve rural water quality; and Technoserve, which received $500,000 to award winners of an entrepreneurial competition in Ghana.

Banks To Tighten Security For Online Logons

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, made up of federal agencies including the Federal Reserve and the FDIC, will require banks to strengthen security of Internet logons to help reduce identity theft. By the end of 2006, banks will have to require two forms of authentication from customers. For the two-factor authentication, users would log on using a username and password as well as a physical component, such as a smartcard, a token that generates a new numeric password every minute, or a biometric device. Experts say a username and password alone are too easy for criminals to crack.

Super Patch From Oracle Fixes Many Flaws

As part of Oracle's quarterly patch release cycle, the company released a Critical Patch Update that provides patches for numerous flaws in its products. The majority of the vulnerabilities are simple to exploit and could experience wide-reaching effects if attacked, so they have Oracle's most serious rating. The patch contains fixes for 33 vulnerabilities in Database products, 22 flaws in E-Business Suite and Applications, 14 in Oracle's Application Server, 13 in its Collaboration Suite, four in PeopleSoft's PeopleTools, and two in JD Edwards software programs.

5% Earning Increase For Intel

Intel reported a 5% increase in earnings in Q3, due in great part to strong processor sales. Revenue for the quarter was $9.96 billion, up 18% year-over-year; net income was $2 billion, up from $1.91 billion for the same quarter in 2003. Intel CEO Paul Otellini said that the demand for mobile processors was strong and that processors for servers also did better than expected. Intel expects Q4 revenue of $10.2 billion to $10.8 billion.

Nortel Names New CEO

Nortel has announced that former Motorola COO Mike Zafirovski will take over as the company's CEO and president. Zafirovski, who spent 25 years with General Electric in many different senior executive positions before his time at Motorola, will be replacing Bill Owen, who has led Nortel since April 2004. Nortel's shares rose 27 cents following the announcement of the change in leadership.

Nigeria & Microsoft Team Up To Fight Fraud

Microsoft and the Nigerian government have agreed to work together to crack down on criminals who use the Internet to commit crimes such as email scams and identity theft. Microsoft will help Nigerian law enforcement involved in Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission by providing training and information for tracking down criminals. So far, information that Microsoft passed on to law enforcement agents has led to the shutdown of three ISPs.

U.S. Spam On Decline

The United States was the origin for 26% of spam worldwide over the past six months, according Sophos. That's down from 41.5% a year ago. Spam originating from South Korea and China, however, is on the increase, accounting for about 20% and 16%, respectively, up from 12% and 9% last year. Sophos credits the decline in spam originating in the United States to tighter legislation, stiffer punishments for convicted spammers, and better system security.

Asian Job Outlook Is Promising

More than 50% of companies across Asia expect to increase staffs and raise salaries, according to a survey by Hudson, a human resources agency. In China 68% of those surveyed expect to hire more staff; in Hong Kong 52% expect to increase their staff size. Most jobs will be in sales, engineering, operations, and technical areas. China also is the leader when it comes to increasing salaries: 83% of respondents expect to raise salaries over the next 12 months; 54% expect that salary increase to be 5% or more.

Indian Companies Feeling Outsourcing Benefits

There's no doubt India's outsourcing industry is growing. The country's two largest outsourcing providers had significant growth in profits over the past year. Tata Consultancy, India's leading outsourcing company, reported a 20.5% increase in quarterly profits; Infosys' profits rose 36%. Both companies have announced plans to expand into the European market. The U.S. market currently provides most of their revenue.

WATCH THE STOCKS

This information provides a quick glimpse of current and historical stock prices and trends for 16 major companies in the technology market.

Company	Symbol	Year Ago	Oct. 12 $	Oct. 19 $	% change from previous week
Avaya	AV	$13.27	$11.02	$11.65	▲ 5.72%
BEA Systems	BEAS	$7.80	$8.26	$8.55	▲ 3.51%
Computer Associates	CA	$26.98	$26.25	$26.72	▲ 1.79%
Cisco Systems	CSCO	$18.45	$17.43	$17.20	▼ 1.32%
Dell	DELL	$35.37	$32.65	$32.38	▼ 0.83%
Electronic Data Systems	EDS	$19.17	$21.65	$21.53	▼ 0.55%
Google	GOOG	$140.49	$300.97	$308.70	▲ 2.57%
HP	HPQ	$18.23	$27.30	$27.64	▲ 1.25%
IBM	IBM	$88.82	$82.19	$84.17	▲ 2.41%
Intel	INTC	$21.45	$23.24	$23.69	▲ 1.94%
McAfee	MFE	$21.94	$29.84	$30.46	▲ 2.08%
Microsoft	MSFT	$28.70	$24.30	$25.09	▲ 3.25%
Oracle	ORCL	$12.42	$12	$12.19	▲ 1.58%
Red Hat Software	RHAT	$13.18	$20.05	$21.70	▲ 8.23%
Sun Microsystems	SUNW	$4.02	$3.93	$3.97	▲ 1.02%
Symantec	SYMC	N/A	$21.98	$22.68	▲ 3.18%

NOTE: This information is meant for reference only and should not be used as a basis for buy/sell decisions.

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Load Balancing Hardware

Deal With Heavy Loads On Web Servers, Application Servers & Network Traffic

by Paul Ferrill

• • •

While some companies would love to have the problem of heavy traffic on their Web site, those that do have to either deal with it or lose business. Nothing turns Internet shoppers away faster than a slow Web site. The same goes for a company-wide application that takes forever to return the information you're looking for.

Load balancing is a generic term used to describe a combination of hardware and software designed to distribute network or application traffic evenly across the available resources. Choosing the right hardware depends a lot on what problem you're trying to fix. While most of the vendors will sell you a system that will help with a pure network or Web traffic problem, they all take a slightly different approach.

Understanding the true nature of the problem will help to determine a solution that will work. For example, the symptom may be slow response time to a product search on the company Web site. In reality the root problem could be in either a database bottleneck or an undersized application server.

Most high-volume Internet sites utilize some type of clustered server architecture for reliability, performance, and scalability reasons. A load balancing hardware solution will sit between the Internet and the server cluster in order to evenly distribute the traffic to the different Web servers. In most cases it will also route traffic around a failed cluster node to provide that extra level of reliability.

Different Problems, Similar Solutions

While these network-related problems may seem different, the solution is often a similar approach. For pure capacity issues such as an undersized server or poor performing database, you can often fix the problem with better hardware. Load balancing can help make better use of available resources by intelligently choosing where to handle the processing.

The OSI seven-layer model has been used for years to describe how networks interact at different layers. The seven layers are:

1. Physical
2. Data Link
3. Network
4. Transport
5. Session
6. Presentation
7. Application

A network load balancing solution would operate at layers 2, 3, and 4 while a purely application balancing approach would operate at layer 7.

Cisco Systems

Cisco Systems has made its name on building networking infrastructure hardware that keeps the most demanding networks up and running. The Catalyst 6500 system is Cisco's highest selling product. It was designed to deal directly with problems at layers 2, 3, and 4. Built on a modular chassis, the Catalyst 6500 is expandable to handle everything from switching to firewall services to SSL and IPSec services.

The Cisco CSS 11000 is a hardware-based load balancer that uses a similar modular approach to the Catalyst. You can start out with a basic configuration and add additional modules as the need arises. With other modules you can add hardware SSL offload and acceleration along with other application acceleration capabilities.

Cisco's expertise in the network infrastructure game makes it uniquely qualified to build products that understand the flow of traffic, be it TCP or UDP. Its products are architected for growth and flexibility. The key to buying from Cisco is that it is a one-stop shop for all your networking infrastructure needs.

SnapShot

Cisco

$9,995 to $39,995

Cisco's CSS11000 family of products, as well as an add-on module to the Catalyst 6500 data center switch, directly addresses server load balancing

www.cisco.com

F5 Networks

The BIG-IP line of products from F5 addresses both the application acceleration problem (or layer 7) and the network traffic management problem. In addition, BIG-IP helps address the ever present threat of Web attacks such as denial of service and application attacks.

F5 pioneered the concept of application traffic management with the BIG-IP product line. Version 9 of the BIG-IP systems adds a suite of application acceleration and optimization features. F5's Traffic Management Operating System architecture is designed to increase network efficiency and control while improving end-user performance. Support for a broad range of load balancing algorithms, HTTP compression, and the ability to avoid unavailable servers help make the BIG-IP family a market leader.

SnapShot

F5

BIG-IP 6400: $34,995
Application Security Module: $12,500

The BIG-IP Local Traffic Manager is an application traffic management system that provides an intelligent and adaptable solution to secure, optimize, and deliver applications; you can also add additional software modules such as the Application Security Module and hardware accelerators

www.F5.com

Coyote Point

Coyote Point believes there is demand for this type of equipment for the small to medium-sized enterprise. As more and more companies rely on the Internet for both outward facing customer-centric Web sites and inbound employee and business partner traffic, it's easy to see where they might benefit from the same hardware solutions as the big players.

SnapShot

Coyote Point

E350si: $5,995

Delivers layer 7 functionality to differentiate among users, letting you direct traffic to the right server and handle the most demanding ecommerce application; the Equalizer also functions as a failure monitor and will automatically switch traffic to a different server when it detects a problem

www.Processor.com/CoyotePoint2

Coyote Point offers the Equalizer line of products focused at both the SME and higher-end markets. The E350si is its hottest selling product, delivering a number of features for an affordable price. The Equalizer's layer 7 functionality makes it possible to differentiate among users to direct them to the appropriate server. Other supported functionality includes URL parsing, persistent cookies, and a virtual cluster technology that makes it possible to assign pools of servers to the most heavily used applications and services.

Coyote Point's Envoy product is a geographic load balancing add-on for the Equalizer. Envoy allows any Equalizer to cooperate with its peers to enable intelligent request distribution across a geographically distributed server cluster. Traffic is routed to the appropriate region based on the DNS address of the requestor.

XiNCOM

The XiNCOM XC-DPG503 is targeted at small businesses that are looking to get the most out of any combination of two broadband connections, including cable, DSL, or T1. It would also appeal to companies with multiple branch offices seeking to establish a secure connection using available network connectivity. Using two XC-DPG503 boxes connected over the Internet, you can establish a dual-redundant VPN to securely link the two networks together.

From a load balancing perspective, the XC-DPG503 will let you use both WAN ports simultaneously for increased bandwidth. XiNCOM uses a session-based load balancing approach, meaning it operates at layer 5 of the OSI model. An auto crossover feature makes it simple to connect to an existing network. Other features include advanced Network Address Translation configurations, a built-in DHCP server, stateful packet inspection firewall, and more.

Remote monitoring and management makes it possible to control the box from anywhere on the Internet as long as the box has connectivity. The Web browser-based management console is easy to use and even provides a firmware update option. The XC-DPG503 also supports dynamic DNS in the case where your ISP doesn't provide a fixed IP address.

SnapShot

XiNCOM

XC-DPG503: $299

Cost-effective load balancing solution targeted at the small to medium-sized enterprise or for a branch office in a larger organization; leveraging commercially available broadband connections makes this product a real cost saver for small IT budgets

www.Processor.com/Xincom

The Right Fix

Load balancing hardware can help improve many performance-related issues. The key is in understanding the nature of the problem and then applying the right fix. Many of the vendors mentioned here also provide customer support engineers to help identify the right product to meet your needs. All you have to do is ask.

Buying Tips

Here are some things to consider when you're purchasing load balancing hardware.

- Try to identify the problem you want to address as specifically as possible, even down to the individual user or application.
- Gather the necessary data to justify your investment and make it as detailed as possible. This could include employee labor hours saved or an increased peak Web traffic capacity.
- Plan for a pilot test project. Some vendors will even provide hardware for you to try out on a loaner basis.
- Understand your budget realities. Don't propose a solution that you know will never make it past the first manager who sees it.

To see *Processor* Showcase advertisements for products in this category, look in the Solution Index on page 2 and find the Load Balancing ads under Communications/Content Networking.

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Fax: (914) 944-0717

Cache Engine
www.Processor.com/Swell

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$1,995

The **Procyon** Web Caching Appliance offers security, reliability, and flexibility by leveraging the power of Open Source Software. Combining a tightly integrated hardware platform with an easy-to-use GUI and proven software components, the Procyon is an affordable and powerful caching solution for ISPs, small business, enterprise and education environments. More info: **processor.com/swell**

swelltechnology

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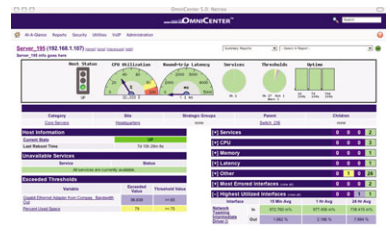

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Top SME IT Concern: VoIP

What Are The Top Issues In VoIP Implementations? Hint: They Don't Involve Security

by Elizabeth Millard

• • •

Now that VoIP is gaining significant momentum, many small and mid-sized enterprises are only too happy to jump on the bandwagon and are seeing reduced telephony costs as a result.

But, like any new technology, VoIP also has issues that need to be addressed, according to industry experts, and some affect SMEs in particular. Larger companies that have the funding for consultant teams might be able to sidestep some of VoIP's challenges without much effort, but SMEs will have to put in time and effort to make sure VoIP implementations are worry-free. Here are some of the top concerns.

Rip & Replace Headaches

Because SMEs have smaller offices than large firms, many are tempted to simply take out existing phone systems and put in VoIP in one swift move. But the shift isn't as easy as replacing one telephone with another, says John Halpin, public sector strategy manager at 3Com.

Action Plan

To alleviate some of the top concerns, industry experts and analysts suggest the following:

- Do as much pre-implementation planning as possible
- Assign one individual to head VoIP installation, training, and maintenance; separate tasks can be delegated from that person, though
- Find out about post-installation services offered by each VoIP vendor
- Use vendor resources such as training and support
- Be realistic about cost and service expectations

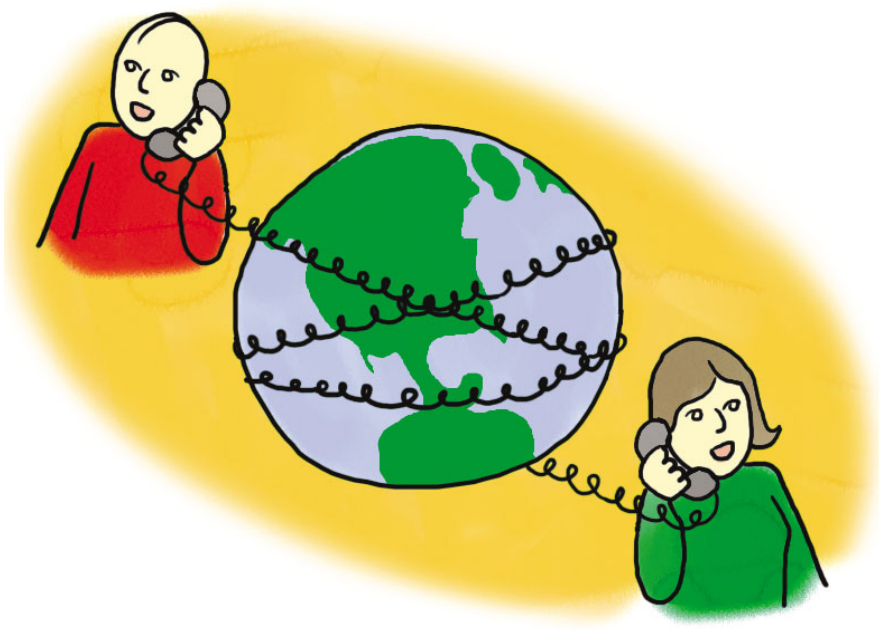
"Companies, especially smaller ones, are much better off doing a test before they really implement VoIP," he suggests. "Putting VoIP in just one department, or even just one room, is a way for technicians to get comfortable and give everyone a sense of how the system works."

The more limited implementation will also allow IT to train employees in smaller groups, rather than having to get everyone up and running within days after an implementation, a situation that could become hazardous to the help desk's health.

Network Strength

Another significant concern is whether an SME's network is really ready for VoIP. In some cases, the upgrade that's needed just to deliver VoIP can wipe out any cost savings that might subsequently be realized.

"When converting to an IP network, companies need to think about that bandwidth increase and what that's going to involve," says Mary Ellen Buzzelli, a business development manager at Siemens. "A network has to be in the proper shape for VoIP to come in, and that might mean upgrades—to routers, servers, and operating systems."



Smaller companies might not have the resources to do a full VoIP rollout in the way a large company can, Buzzelli notes. SMEs that aren't ready yet for VoIP should do gradual upgrades but always keep IP telephony in mind, she advises. In many cases, a five-year plan, detailing network enhancements, can put VoIP in reach.

Mission Critical Calls

Although many SMEs will use VoIP throughout their organizations, companies that absolutely can't have a telephone line down should be very cautious about implementing IP telephony, according to Bob Bluemer, a director at networking firm Avaya.

"I don't know of a single police department using IP for their phone system," he says. "The reason is its reliability. A company may not mind a few minutes of downtime on the phones, but if you have emergency calls, that's going to feel like a very long couple of minutes."

The difficulty comes in increased bandwidth, which can sometimes spike without warning if there's a DoS attack or other bandwidth-clogging action, Bluemer says. In some companies, he points out, VoIP is used for the majority of calls, but mission-critical phones are plugged into the telephone company's system.

Realistic Expectations

VoIP will save so much money that you can buy a whole new data center! It will centralize voice and data into one management application! It could cure cancer!

The fact is that when the hype around VoIP actually started coming true, many companies saw the systems as panaceas for limited budgets. But there's only so much savings that VoIP will provide, and only so many new services it can boast, says Bluemer.

"Make a list of expectations, and bring that to vendor meetings," he advises. "Understand that bandwidth issues, the age of data networks, and migration costs will all play a part in changing those expectations. And if the vendor doesn't address those, find another vendor."

Most Overhyped Threat: Hackers Will Bust In Through VoIP

Security is uppermost in the minds of IT managers—and for good reason. There are now multiple ways to jump onto a company's network, thanks to equipment such as Internet-enabled printers and wireless routers. But, some analysts say, VoIP doesn't fall into the same category.

Despite a rash of warnings about VoIP's potential for causing security threats, companies should keep in mind that it's a closed network, says John Pescatore, analyst at research firm Gartner. "There have been all these wild claims about people being able to listen in on IP telephony calls from the parking lot of a company," he noted. "But you would actually have to be in the building, on the network, and have administrator access to the LAN." Security should be kept in mind, Pescatore adds, but VoIP is not the gateway to attack that some have feared.

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Security In The SME

Continued from Page 1

DoS attacks were the most costly, according to the 2004 Computer Crime and Security Survey; however, DoS attacks rarely affect smaller organizations unless the target is a hosting service that the SME also uses. The survey found that 53% of the 494 responding U.S. computer security practitioners said they had been subject to a hack attack in the previous 12 months, the smallest percentage recorded since 1999.

"While everyone is a potential target, big, well-known organizations are the biggest targets for those kinds of attacks," says Simson Garfinkel, the author of numerous books on computer security and a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University's Center for Research on Computation and Society.

Why? Because bigger organizations often have separate, dedicated security staffs, they do tend to be better protected. But these organizations also offer a bigger prize: Hundreds of thousands of customer names, credit card account numbers, and other identifying information can often be grabbed with a single hack. An SME may offer just a few hundred. What's more, SME networks aren't accessed as much, sometimes making it easier to track unauthorized entries by hand.

Should you hire a consultant to help identify and plug the holes? Should you invest in security education for the IT staff? Should you concentrate on security appliances? Not surprisingly, purveyors of security expertise vary in their opinions, and the variations depend in part on what products and services they provide.

The first step is to get a meaningful security budget. Garfinkel says that's easier when the organization has to meet regulatory requirements. Hospitals, for instance, have to satisfy the federal government requirements that patient records are safe from all but the most sophisticated hackers. Financial institutions also get extra federal regulation and scrutiny. "But it's not hacking that results in the most damaging penetrations to an enterprise's security system. It is often the work of an employee within the enterprise that causes the most damage. And while many of those incidents are due to employee malice, a great number stem from the manipulation of employees—often without their knowledge—that result in the theft of crucial data."

Garfinkel notes the obvious: Companies don't like to put money into anything that is a cost center without it also being a profit center. "If an organization doesn't put money into security and there is no security incident, management thinks it did the right thing," says Garfinkel. "But if they put money into security and something happens anyway, the IT folks who proposed the budget are fall guys."

In that environment, Garfinkel says, IT departments should try to gauge the risk and lower it, not promise to eliminate it." He says that doing a risk assessment "is tough, but taking the time to learn how to do it yourself is worth it."

Garfinkel says that IT personnel in smaller companies should spend money first on training seminars and books about security before spending on consultants and security appliances.

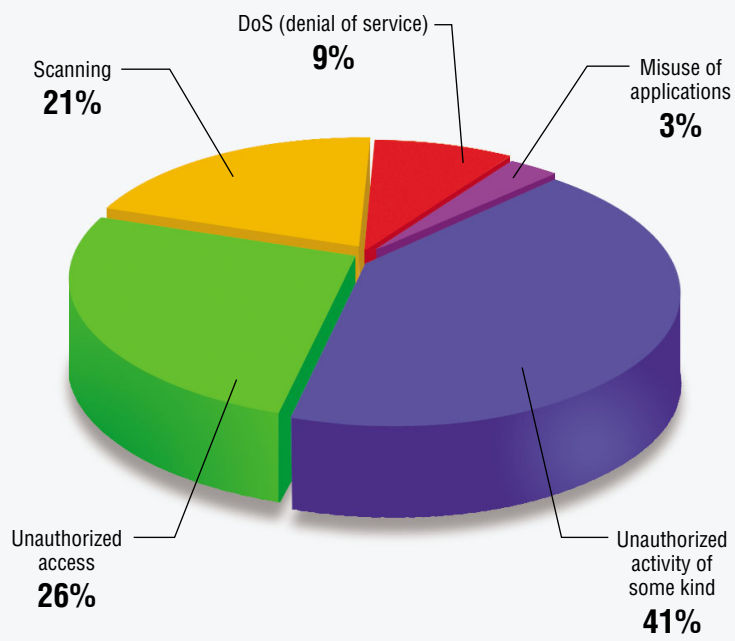
53% of the 494 responding U.S. computer security practitioners said they had been subject to a hack attack in the previous 12 months, the smallest percentage recorded since 1999.

Stats & Facts: 2004 Security Attacks

Counterpane Internet Security reported that 41% of the attacks it observed in 2004 were caused by unauthorized activity; unauthorized access accounted for 26% of the attacks. Note that only 9% of attacks were DoS related.

Attacks Observed by Counterpane Internet Security in 2004

(648,000 security events investigated, on 450 networks in 36 countries)



SOURCE: MONITORING OF 450 NETWORKS IN 36 COUNTRIES, BY COUNTERPANE SECURITY

So does M. Angela Sasse, a professor at University College London who specializes in security. "Security products don't by themselves protect you. People try to use the stuff as an amulet," she says.

Employees: A Big Security Problem

"We would disagree with Garfinkel absolutely," says Brichko. ForeScout's ActiveScout appliance checks incoming network traffic for noncompliance with an organization's security rules.

Action Plan

The following tips can help alleviate some security concerns for the small to midsized enterprise.

- Go for training first. It will sensitize IT personnel to security issues and help them to pick and choose among security solutions.
- Build a budget that quantifies the potential cost of a successful attack.
- Do a reality check to see the kinds of attacks the organization is already receiving.
- Bring in a consultant to audit your operations and make sure you haven't missed anything; an "add on audit" after you've closed most of the holes is most cost efficient because you'll have data to show. You'll also be able to better understand and implement the consultant's report.
- Layer the defense in this order: Better employee training, tougher access rules, organization-supplied corporate subscription to an antivirus/antispam package, and finally a security appliance to monitor your firewall in real time.

ActiveScout is "designed to eliminate a lot of the work, so while I would agree that [employees] should get training, all of this is automatic, so it is not like all the security guys looking through the logs trying to figure out the hack," says Brichko.

ForeScout's appliances help monitor the biggest potential hole in security for SMEs: the user. "As soon as a user plugs into the network, our appliance checks all virus and other updates for noncompliance," says Brichko. Based on a set of rules that the system administrator applies, the ForeScout system can completely cut off a user or restrict access to the network. The appliance also checks the servers for updates and patches and notifies system administrators.

Gartner estimates that more than 70% of unauthorized access to information systems is committed by employees, as are more than 95% of intrusions that result in significant financial losses. The attacker can be a person inside or outside the enterprise who pretends to be someone else or someone who has fooled an employee into releasing network information. It can also be an employee who installs innocent-looking code.

An appliance is indeed the last line of defense against breaches caused by unwitting or dishonest employees. But common sense demands that employees be trained about security on a continuing basis, even if an appliance is installed. IT has to continue paying attention to the real and ever-changing threats.

Anatomy Of A Data Center Fire

Continued from Page 1

one common cause of fire involves inaccessible cabling. Too many data centers rely on outdated electrical wiring, and without a raised floor, managers rarely schedule maintenance. There's also a common misconception about the source of a fire. Too often, a fire starts outside the data center and creeps into the server room, where the disaster escalates and becomes uncontrollable. "Surrounding areas—above, below, and around—the data center should be checked for high risk just as much as the data center," says Hill.

One commonly overlooked step in dealing with a data center fire is to equip the room with Class C fire extinguishers.

Early Detection

If a data center fire does start, early detection is critical because it means preventing excessive damage. Every server rack should be equipped with a temperature sensing device programmed to send the manager a warning notice. This technique is also used as a prevention method, but it's often the first clue that a fire has started. Hill advises managers to install both smoke and heat sensors in the room connected to a waterless fire suppression system. There should be about a 30-second delay before the suppression system starts because if a false alarm occurs, the clean-up is costly.

"The data center should be under constant monitoring either locally, within the data center itself, or remotely," says Hill. "The monitoring may be through policy-driven software that monitors both the environmental sensors as well as the enclosure (system) sensors. When a threshold is exceeded, a warning—probably audible—should be issued, but other notification methods, such as paging, should be used."

Of course, the most critical aspect of early detection is in saving lives and preventing harmful emissions. Ed Broderick, an Experture analyst, notes that the Halon chemicals used for fire suppression are extremely dangerous, so he advises an air-tight evacuation scheme, designed with help from the local fire department. Most importantly, Broderick says the data center managers should ensure that fire evacuation plans tie closely to not only the overall data center disaster recovery plan but also to enterprise-wide disaster planning, which is a common oversight.

"You need a scheme for ensuring that everyone is accounted for outside the data center and building," Broderick says. "These procedures should be part of a larger disaster recovery and business continuity plan that is tested two or three times per year."

"Policies for both orderly and emergency shutdown of equipment without having to start a UPS are critical," adds Hill. "Orderly means that application processes can shut down in a proper fashion, such as shutting down the operating system before turning off the power. Emergency means that the power shuts down right away. Make sure that there is enough power for emergency lighting and any other use of electrical equipment that may be needed to deal with the fire."

Proper Equipment

Lillycrop reiterates the importance of smoke and heat sensors, placed in strategic locations such as the ceiling, floorboards, and walls. He says managers should analyze exactly where servers, especially tightly packed blade systems, emanate heat and then install cooling systems in those locations to prevent fires.

One commonly overlooked step in dealing with a data center fire is to equip the room with Class C fire extinguishers. According to Hill, some data center fires are easily preventable but rage out of control because employees are not trained to put out small electrical fires or because the fire suppression system kicks in too soon and evacuation must begin, which can lead to more costly repairs. Managers must find a critical balance between early detection, human intervention, and evacuation. In the end, the work you do in preparing for a fire will pay dividends in disaster recovery.

Data Center Fire Detection Options

Here is a small sampling of vendor and product options for the small to medium-sized enterprise looking to purchase a data center fire detection system.

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Strike A Balance Between Budget & Growth

The Important Storage Issues That Today's SMEs Face

by Sandra Kay Miller

• • •

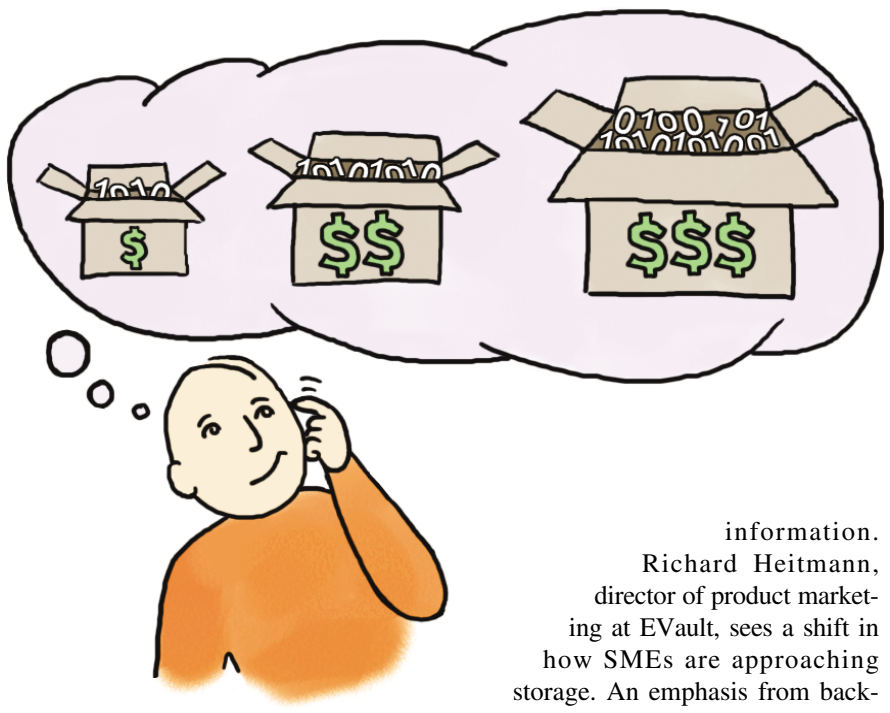
THERE'S NO DEBATE when it comes to the No. 1 issue for small to midsized enterprises when considering storage options: the price tag. "Cost is always going to be the primary concern for SMEs," said Mike Kornblum, president of MPAK Technologies, manufacturer and supplier of comprehensive data storage solutions.

Straddled between small businesses and large enterprises, SMEs face storage issues on each side of the fence. Although every dollar counts in any organization, large enterprises place costs lower than issues such as capacity utilization, smaller backup windows, application availability, and regulatory compliance. Smaller companies tend to focus on the cost vs. needs. But SMEs fall in the middle where they require the feature set for enterprise storage while being cognizant of the costs. "SMEs want the same level of functionality of storage offered to large enterprises only in a midrange solution," says Kornblum.

Hossein ZiaShakeri, senior vice president of strategic marketing at Spectra Logic, agrees, adding that scalability is critical to SME storage. "The ability to bring more feature sets as the small business grows into a medium-sized business is important. They want to be able to easily upgrade without spending a lot of money," says ZiaShakeri. "There are lots of enterprise features SMEs look for as they grow—connectivity, ease of support, reliability, and management features. These all become very important, but ultimately cost plays the final point in this case."

Data Recovery vs. Backup

Fueling the need for enterprise-class storage for midrange organizations has been the explosive growth of electronic information. Richard Heitmann, director of product marketing at EVault, sees a shift in how SMEs are approaching storage. An emphasis from backing up data to recovering data, as well as data security, are leading SMEs to move away from tape storage to online backup and recovery service providers, such as EVault and AmeriVault.



Scott Bush, marketing director of AmeriVault, cites reliability as the principle driver for SMEs to outsource their storage. "Is it backed up daily without people going on vacation, getting sick, and forgetting to take the tapes offsite?" questioned Bush.

Managed online storage solutions solve the issue often cited by SMEs—lack of IT support or budget to ensure data storage reliability and integrity. Bush explains that SMEs can automate the offsite storage of their data and email using simple software and by leveraging their existing bandwidth letting them focus on their core business.

Lulled by a false belief that regulatory compliance only affects large enterprises, SMEs (for example, those in the healthcare industry) now have their storage requirements dictated by government regulations such as HIPAA. Not only must stored data be accessible by auditors, it must also be secure. "Backup and recovery products and services are architected and provisioned to provide the maximum system security and data protection," says Heitmann, pointing out that security features in storage solutions today include advanced technologies such as AES 256-bit encryption.

Enterprise Vendors With SME Products

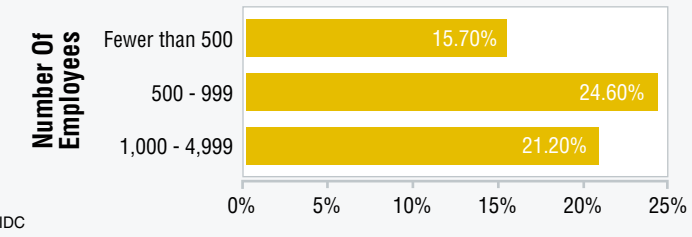
Recognizing potential of the market, enterprise storage vendors such as EMC and HP have recently introduced competitively priced storage solutions targeting SMEs. According to the IDC, the average amount of data SMEs store today ranges from 5 to 30TB. In addition to the physical aspects of storage, IT managers must integrate application availability into their storage solution. Faced with mounting pressure to increase system performance, manage costs, and meet regulator compliance, brand recognition is playing a significant role in SMEs' storage choices.

The middle-of-the-road position has given SMEs the best of both worlds in terms of the storage market. Enterprise-class features using new technologies are keeping pace with their storage needs, often for a price they can live—and grow—with.

Stats & Facts

A survey by IDC shows that expanding storage capacity is important to IT managers of midtier and small to midsized enterprises. About 25% of companies with between 500 and 999 employees say that increasing spending for storage in the next 12 months is a priority.

IT Spending Budgets For Storage Increase



SOURCE: IDC

Hype Or Hot? The Real Threats For Data Loss

Natural disasters and malware are always in the headlines and frequently are used as a business case for storage solutions. Hurricane Katrina has certainly increased awareness and shifted attention towards events that can be devastating to business. The truth is that the majority of data losses occur because of hardware failure, data corruption, or simple human error.

Richard Heitmann, EVault's director of product marketing, says, "SMEs must continue to use mature products and implement best practices for protecting their data from these more common causes of data loss."

How often is data lost to malware vs. human error? In his experience, Scott Bush, marketing director of AmeriVault, has found that manual error is responsible for more data loss than malware. "You read about virus attacks in the news, but how many actually get through the front door?" says Bush. "People don't want to point the finger at themselves."

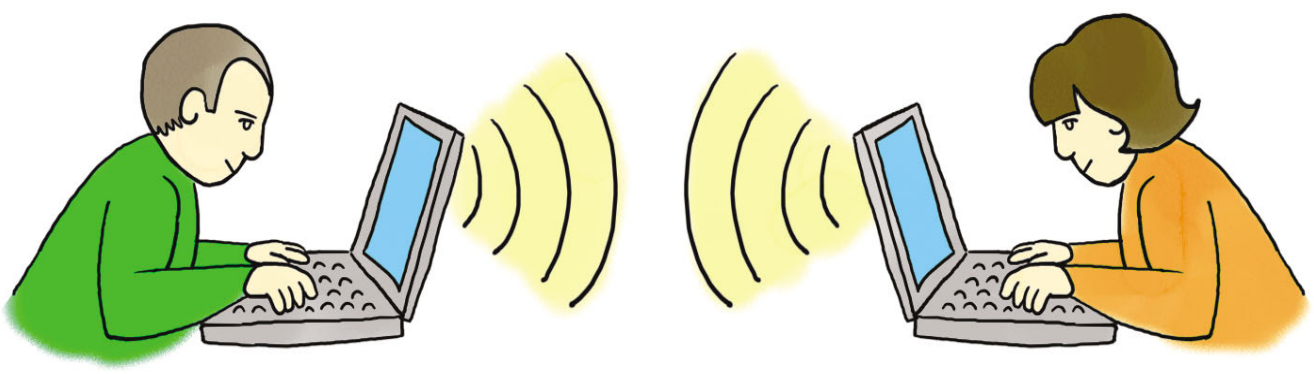
Wireless Network Roadblocks

Security Remains A Top Concern For SMEs

by Paul Ferrill

• • •

When it comes to implementing wireless in the small to midsized enterprise space, picking the right technology to meet bandwidth needs and protect from short-term obsolescence is the challenge of the day. Cheap hardware and low-priced broadband services present new opportunities for those SMEs looking to reduce operating costs; however, security remains a big concern, as companies hear stories about compromised data and network breaches all too often.



Security Nightmares

Compromised company data is every IT professional's worst nightmare—especially if the breach was a direct result of something you did or didn't do to protect the company data. Let's face it: Wireless networks have the reputation of being insecure, and stories of hackers sitting in parking lots snatching credit card numbers don't help matters any.

Today's wireless security standards have gone a long way toward fixing the security problems, though; wireless networks can be secured with the right combination of hardware and software. All new client access devices carrying the Wi-Fi Alliance certification must have WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access) built in. WPA comes in two flavors: personal and enterprise.

WPA-Enterprise security uses a combination of encryption and authentication to prevent unauthorized access to a network. Each network user must be validated using the 802.1x authentication framework against a corporate identity server. Microsoft Windows Server 2003 supports this type of authentication through Active Directory.

Other security methods can also be employed to protect sensitive data including VPNs for mobile workers, MAC filtering to enable only specific devices for access, and RADIUS (Remote Access Dial-Up User Service) authentication. All of these methods require either additional hardware or software and someone knowledgeable to set it up.

Implementation

The old adage "When you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there" certainly rings true when it comes to wireless networking. Implementing a wireless network just to keep up with the latest trends—without a specific business need to fill—is an invitation to a disaster.

Craig Mathias, principal and founder of the Farpoint Group, an advisory firm specializing in wireless communications and mobile computing, says, "You need to know the data requirements of your users. Key things to identify include mission-critical applications, data volumes, and time-bounded responses. All of these factors combined will help determine how you implement a wireless network."

Understanding the scenarios where wireless networking makes sense is the first step to getting it done right. One perfect application for wireless networking would be a company experiencing significant growth and looking to lease office space. A wireless network would be a great solution to the problem of no existing infrastructure.

A good security plan is also essential. The Wi-Fi Alliance has a number of good white papers that describe in great detail how to implement wireless security in the enterprise. A little vigilance will go a long way in protecting your company from a compromise. Good security practices include proper hardware configuration and operating procedures. Nothing can substitute for a good plan when it comes to implementing security.

The Money Factor

Cost can also be a significant factor for the SME looking at a wireless network. A wireless network simply doesn't make economic sense if existing network wiring is available.

Of course, comparing costs between wired and wireless networks is much more complicated than it might seem. A lot depends on the situation. With the drop in prices for client devices and enterprise-class access points, the difference in hardware costs is negligible. "We use a rough estimate of $125 to $150 per drop in labor costs for installation of a new network, which doesn't include any special requirements like conduit or special sheathing," says Mathias.

Mathias also recommends using triple-mode client devices supporting the a/b/g standards. Although these devices typically don't come standard on most desktop machines, it's pretty common to find new laptops with some type of wireless capability built in. On the network infrastructure side, Mathias recommends an enterprise-class switched wireless network with good network management software and support for PoE.

Wireless networking offers a multitude of benefits but requires a little forethought before taking the plunge. Implementing a new technology is never easy but in this case could well be worth the effort.

Action Plan

To alleviate some of the top concerns, industry experts and analysts suggest the following:

- ✖ Understand the data needs of your users; conduct a survey
- ✖ Buy equipment, especially access points, that can be upgraded
- ✖ Keep up-to-date with security issues involving your equipment
- ✖ Subscribe to any of the security newsletters available from CERT or commercial vendors such as Symantec or Computer Associates
- ✖ Use vendor resources, including newsgroups and update alerts

Most Overhyped Threat: Wardriving Attacks

Much has been made in the general press of wardriving network attacks where malicious hackers attach to unsecured networks. While this may be true in many residential neighborhoods, you won't find too many small to midsized enterprises with an unsecured wireless network. Most have taken the necessary precautions and secured their networks using strong encryption (WPA) and user authentication.

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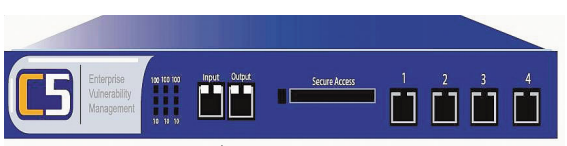

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Product Releases

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LRE & xDSL

■ **Netopia** released its 2200 Series of ADSL2+ gateways for delivering DSL to residential and SOHO customers. The gateways are compatible with existing ADSL networks and new ADSL2/2+ networks. They are also TR-069-compliant and provide VGx QoS. The 2200 Series gateways provide an RJ-11, ADSL2+ WAN interface, and offer several LAN configurations. The Netopia 22040N-VGx supports a single USB LAN interface. The 2241N-VGx has a 10/100 Ethernet port and a USB interface. The 2246N-VGx has a 4-port 10/100 Ethernet switch, and the 2247NWG-VGx has 802.11b/g WiFi and a 4-port 10/100 Ethernet switch. The 2200 Series gateways also include an integrated PPPoE client.

Security

■ **Astaro** released its Security Gateway 425, a unified threat management and network security device. The Security Gateway 425 includes Sensory Networks' NodalCore acceleration card to perform more than twice as much virus scanning as the Security Gateway 420. Astaro claims the 425 model is the only product in its class to offer dual virus scanning. Built around a 3.4GHz Intel Pentium 4 processor, the 425 model has 2GB DDR2 SDRAM, a 74GB SATA, and eight Gigabit ports. The Security Gateway 425 starts at $9,995.

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■ **CipherTrust** released the IronIM, which is a gateway security appliance for both email and IM communications. CipherTrust's patented policy engine secures, logs, monitors, and encrypts enterprise IM communications and lets administrators manage communications for compliance purposes. Supported IM platforms include AOL Instant Messenger, MSN Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger, Google Talk, Microsoft LCS, and IBM SameTime. The CipherTrust IronIM is available for $5,995.

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■ **F5's** BIG-IP Application Security Module is a new firewall add-on for the company's BIG-IP 6400 and 6800 Traffic Management platforms. Available for $12,500, the BIG-IP ASM is based on F5's TrafficShield application and TMOS architecture.

• • • • •

■ **RedCannon** released a USB memory appliance that integrates with Citrix ICA Client. The Fireball KeyPoint is a centrally managed device that connects to the Citrix Access Suite without drivers or extra software on remote computers. The device scans remote computers and pinpoints spyware and Trojans to prevent malicious users from accessing login information. KeyPoint supports encrypted XML logs of violation reports.

• • • • •

■ **SafeNet** announced its SafeXcel-5150, which features full-duplex 100Mbps performance for small packets, combining a RISC processor and fast-path inline security packet processing on a single chip. Built for the requirements of the SME security gateway market, the SafeXcel-5150 targets appliances designed for Fast Ethernet 100Mbps throughput.

• • • • •

■ **TippingPoint** announced its TippingPoint Intrusion Prevention System product. This is a network-based product designed to block phishing attempts and guard against identity theft. The IPS uses a variety of mechanisms to detect and prevent phishing scams including vulnerability protection, pattern-matching protection, and behavior-based protection.

• • • • •

■ MailGate Appliance 3.0 is the new 64-bit security appliance from **Tumbleweed**. Besides the usual antivirus, antispam, and content filtering features, MailGate Appliance 3.0 adds protection against phishing, spyware, and "dark traffic," such as directory harvest and email DoS attacks. In other news, Tumbleweed announced that its MailGate Email Firewall 6.2 security software suite now supports OpenPGP encryption.

Switch

■ **Agere Systems**, in conjunction with **SMC Networks**, announced the release of the TigerSwitch 1000 line of Gigabit workgroup switches. These switches are powered by Agere Systems' Ethernet chips. This line was designed to turn unmanaged data networks into converged IP infrastructures. It features the Agere ET4K and Agere Octal TruePHY 1081 Ethernet chipset. The ET4K is a single chip, 48-port Ethernet switch that lets the TigerSwitch 1000 operate 48 channels simultaneously. The Octal TruePHY 1081 is a chip that exceeds error-free performance standards and requires less power to operate than other industry options.

• • • • •

■ **Axiomtek** is targeting its new switches at businesses in rugged industrial areas that experience unusual temperatures. The company announced the iCOM49224SFC8-GT-U Gigabit Copper Harden Managed Switch, a device that boasts 16 10/100 base-TX ports, eight 100 base-FX ports, and two 10/100/1000 ports. Another new switch, the iCOM-49224SFC8-SX-U Harden Managed Switch, includes 16 10/100 base-TX ports, eight 100 base-FX ports, and two 1000-SX ports. The iCOM 4000 series switches include such network monitoring and management features as Spanning Tree, VLAN Tagging, IGMP, QoS, RMON, SNMP v2/v3, and Web management. The switches operate in 34 degrees Celsius to 74 degrees Celsius.

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Making The Sale From Anywhere

Sybase's iAnywhere Solution Updates Mobile Product For Salesforce Users

by Joseph Pasquini

• • •

FOR MANY BUSINESS travelers, being out in the field sometimes means being without the productivity tools one would normally have access to back in the office. Such a situation is especially true for sales professionals who require instant portable access to their key sales and customer data. With that goal in mind for Salesforce.com users, Sybase's iAnywhere Solutions has introduced the latest version of its Sales Anywhere for Salesforce.com mobile automation product.

"Sales Anywhere is a hosted service that is exceptionally easy to deploy and maintain and requires no administrative setup. This keeps costs low and minimizes adoption barriers while enabling dramatically increased field sales effectiveness and productivity," says Brian Vink, iAnywhere's vice president of marketing.

The mobile sales product, which functions with or without a wireless connection, provides full read and write access to Salesforce accounts, contacts, product line items, schedules, tasks, and events. Using a compatible PDA, users can capture order information at the point of activity rather than originally filling out a paper order and later entering the data upon return to the office.

SNAPSHOT

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To access their Salesforce data, users simply install Sales Anywhere on their handheld device. All Salesforce customizations such as custom fields, record type/page layout, renamed tabs, and sharing rules are automatically applied. Data filtering is provided through the Salesforce.com Offline Briefcase. Both simple and advanced data search capabilities, as well as list view sorting, are also offered. In addition to syncing customer information between the PDA and Salesforce, application updates are also delivered automatically at synchronization.

The latest version of Sales Anywhere can be used for initiating and tracking both email and phone conversations directly from capable mobile devices. Handheld platforms supported by Sales Anywhere include Windows Mobile Pocket PC or Pocket PC Phone 2002, 2003, and 2003 SE devices, as well as Palm OS 5 devices including the Treo 650. Support for the RIM BlackBerry family of devices is expected later this year. The update also contains expanded language support including French, Italian, German, Spanish, Swedish, and Brazilian Portuguese.

Sales Anywhere faces competition from both Sendia's WorkSpace CRM and Vettro's RainMaker 4.3. WorkSpace CRM, which does not offer support for Microsoft-based handheld devices, is designed specifically for real-time access to sales data over the air. Meanwhile, RainMaker, which also offers Symbian support, automatically maintains a single view of calendar events and tasks across the Salesforce.com, mobile device, and Outlook/Exchange or Lotus Notes mail systems. P

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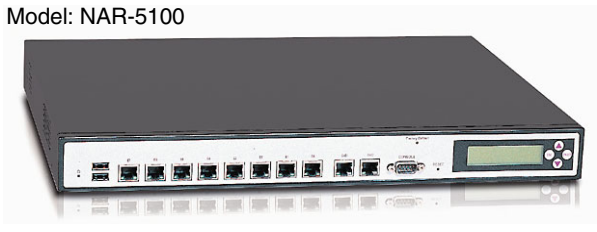

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Product Releases

Continued from Page 16

Telephony

■ **Vertical Communications** announced IOVS (InstantOffice Voice Server), an open, VoiceXML-based platform that lets customers create voice portals and deliver voice-enabled applications to wired and wireless telephones. IOVS is built on Vertical Instant-Office, a communications platform that unifies the administration and management of voice, data, and application services. InstantOffice combines IP-PBX capabilities, a VoIP gateway, VoiceXML-based voice applications, and telephony components with a multisite remote management and reporting capability. IOVS comes with a voice browser, which enables callers to navigate self-service information in a similar manner to navigating through Web pages. IOVS is available on a limited basis.

Wireless

■ **Buffalo Technology** introduced the AirStation Turbo G High Power Wireless Ethernet Converter, which enables any Ethernet-equipped device to connect to a wireless network. The new device features a 4-port 10/100 Auto-Sensing switch. The 802.11b/g-compliant AirStation Turbo G is capable of fast connection speeds and consistent communication for a variety of wired devices, including printers, scanners, gaming consoles, and other wired components.

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■ **Solectek** launched the SkyWay 4000 Series wireless bridge and router systems. Operating in the licensed 4.9GHz frequency band, the 4000 Series is designed to serve public safety agencies operating under state and local governments. The SkyWay 4000 Series features a 400mW radio supporting link distances in excess of 20 miles. For high bandwidth applications, such as video surveillance or streaming video transfer, the product line offers RF link rates to 108Mbps. For combined multimedia network traffic, QoS features provide for the inspection and expedited delivery of prioritized voice, video, and real-time traffic.

END NODES

KVM

■ **Raritan** announced four Dominion SX serial-over-IP console servers and the latest version of its management software appliance, CommandCenter Secure Gateway 2.3. The new device lets administrators diagnose and fix equipment. It includes several new features, including the Association Wizard, which lets users create policies in one step. The device also boasts better Dominion SX integration, including backup configurations and firmware upgrades. The Dominion SX secure console server line added the DSXA-16-DL, which sports 16 ports, and the DSXA-32-DL, which sports 32 ports, to its ranks. The devices have dual LAN and AC feeds, and the M versions of both models have internal modems.

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■ **Tripp Lite** announced the 8-Port Standard KVM Switch, a switch that serves five to eight PCs or servers. The B004-008 has integrated PS/2 support. A USB Adapter, SUN Adapter, 6-foot KVM Cable Kit, 10-foot KVM Cable Kit, and 15-foot KVM Cable Kit are sold separately. The B004-008 is mountable in a standard 19-inch rack system. Each of the eight ports are controlled using hotkey commands and front-mounted port-selection switches. The new switch is available for $199.99.

Mobile

■ **Palm** has introduced the Palm TX handheld device with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and document management. The Palm TX also has a 480- x 320-pixel color screen and supports network scanning and automatic connections to available networks. The handheld also comes with a free 30-day subscription to all T-Mobile Wi-Fi hotspots and includes DataViz Documents To Go. The Palm TX lets users check email when away from the office and synchronize email and PIM data with a desk-top system. The device has a 312MHz processor, 128MB of built-in flash memory, and an expansion slot for MMC, SD, or SDIO cards.

Go to Page 18, Column 1

Enterprise-Grade Software Metering

Eracent's New Solution Offers Advanced Functionality

by Joseph Pasquini

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TRADITIONALLY, the term "asset management" has referred to the inventorying of software and hardware. However, that concept has evolved to now include an analysis of usage trends and licensing utilization. Targeted toward enterprise environments, Eracent's ASM (Active Software Metering) provides the mechanisms needed to collect and analyze real-time usage information of both hardware and software across the corporate landscape.

Composed of both a workstation and a server component, ASM can be used to monitor software usage on individual end-user devices or groups of machines regardless of their location on the network. The continuously running workstation module starts automatically upon device power-up. In addition to task list monitoring, the module also records the start and stop time of each application, the total time each application was run by the user, and the total time the application was in use for each hour the computer was running.

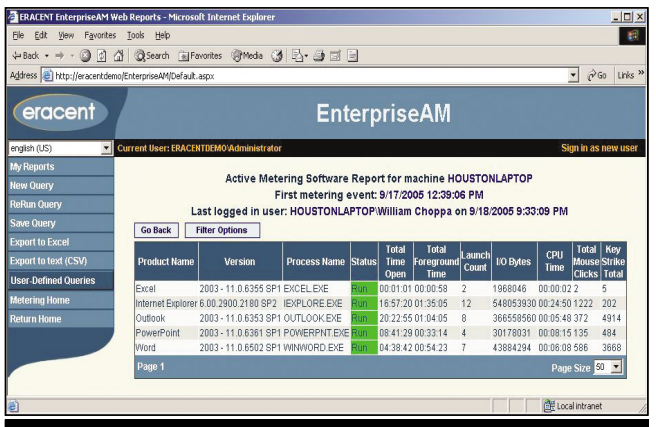
According to Ed Cartier, Eracent's vice president of marketing, the metering solution also offers the ability to measure background processes, taking into account both windowed applications and their associated non-windowed services. Featuring an innocuous memory footprint on an end-user device of only 1.6MB or less, the module periodically connects to the ASM server to report the collected software usage data. This information is cached on the endpoint when the module is not communicating with the server.

ASM is designed to integrate with Eracent's existing enterprise asset management products. Leveraging the software inventory information gathered by Eracent's EnterpriseAM software, along with the software entitlement information complied by its EnterpriseEM software, IT managers can use ASM to create reports detailing software usage as well as current installations and licensing information. Managers can customize reports and format them to reflect the corporate organizational structure. Using ASM's Web-based reporting system, which allows access to any cross section of the available data, managers can review all the characteristics of their deployed software to verify licensing compliance and utilization. Tracked information includes data such as total open time, launch count, CPU time, I/O bytes, mouse clicks, and keystroke count.

ASM is designed to integrate with Eracent's existing enterprise asset management products.

Eracent faces competition in the enterprise market segment from other metering solutions including Altiris' Asset Management Suite and Peregrine's AssetCenter. According to Andy Balmuth, Eracent's senior vice president of business development, ASM provides a level of scalability not found in other offerings. "Active Software Metering is capable of scaling to support multiple thousands upon thousands of scanned devices using a single usage collection server," says Balmuth.

For smaller organizations looking to meter less than 1,000 devices, a subscription-based ASP model of ASM is also available.



SNAPSHOT

Eracent Active Software Metering

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Product Releases

Continued from Page 17

Printer

■ There's a new series of monochrome MFPs from **Ricoh**. The Aficio 3025/3030 series can produce up to 30ppm at 600dpi. Print-on-demand and email alert functions are supported, as is a Scan to URL feature that sends a link over a network. Security features such as store print, hold print, and LDAP and Network Windows authentication further demonstrate the new Aficios' value. Prices are $5,245 for the Aficio 3025 and $6,585 for the 3030. Ricoh also announced the Aficio 3035/3045 series. Better security and more fax features (such as T.38 IP faxing and Fax Forwarding-to-Folder) make the $9,150 3035 and $11,700 3045 stand out from their predecessors, as does more comprehensive document management through Ricoh's DocumentMall. The 3035 and 3045 support Windows and LDAP authentication and the Data Overwrite Security System.

Projector

■ **Lenovo** unveiled the ThinkVision C400 Wireless Projector with integrated 802.11b/g and USB memory key input. With an encrypted wireless network, a user can operate presentations without any additional hardware. The projector provides 2,650 lumens and weighs 7.5 pounds. The C400 offers native XGA resolution, PIP support, and DLP (digital light processing) technology. The ThinkVision C400 comes with a carrying case, a remote control with laser pointer, and a three-year warranty.

Servers

■ **HP** introduced HP ProLiant x86 servers with Intel's dual-core Xeon DP processors. The new servers now include the dual-processor HP ProLiant DL380 and the quad-processor HP ProLiant ML570 and DL580. The DL380 ($4,200) is a 2U rack server with SAS. The DL580 ($7,000) is a four-way, scalable 4U server. It has front-accessible RAID memory with support for up to 64GB. The ML570 ($6,000) is a four-way server with RAID memory, up to 3TB of storage, 10 PCI slots, and 64GB of memory.

Storage

■ **Archion** released Synergy Plus, its SATA II to FC Raid storage package. The device supports Avid Unity storage systems and converts them from mirroring platforms to RAID platforms. The Synergy Plus package supports Medianetwork 4.1. Synergy Plus is available in storage sizes starting at 1TB and has two ports of 2GB FC. Synergy is compatible with Linux, Mac OS (9, X, and Tiger), Unix, and Windows.

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■ **Buffalo Technology** announced the MiniStation Shock Resistant Portable Hard Drive with two available models, the 40GB and the 80GB. Both models are designed to resist damage from being dropped or distressed and feature a 5400rpm drive speed, Windows and Mac compatibility, and USB 2.0 compliance. The 40GB drive is available for $149, and the 80GB drive is available for $199.

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■ **Gateway** introduced storage and server products that integrate 64-bit dual-core Intel Xeon processors. The new products include the 1U rackmount Gateway E-9415R Series server and storage server. Both are ideal for database servers or Web servers and are compatible with ERP and CRM applications. The products are available with three SATA or SCSI drives with up to 1.5TB of RAID 5 storage. Pricing starts at $2,299.99. Gateway also introduced the E-9510T Series tower server, which supports up to 10 SCSI or six SATA II drives with up to 3TB of storage. These servers include 2.8GHz to 3.6GHz 64-bit Intel Xeon processors with 1MB L2 cache, an 800MHz FSB, an Intel E7520 chipset, and dual 10/100/1000 Ethernet.

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■ **Imation** announced its Ulysses disk-enhanced removable media cartridge. The new product provides an HDD through a standard tape cartridge form factor. With the Ulysses cartridge, companies can use D2D2T to make a simpler transition to a new storage and backup system. Ulysses libraries can restore files up to 10 times faster than tape-only libraries. Ulysses cartridges have the same form factor as LTO Ultrium cartridges. The first Ulysses cartridges will be available next year.

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■ **Seagate** announced its Barracuda 7200.9 family of internal hard drives. With up to a half-terabyte capacity and 3Gbps SATA throughput, along with NCQ technology, these drives deliver high levels of performance. The Barracuda 7200.9 automatically configures the drive to either new 3Gbps or legacy 1.5Gbps SATA systems. Barracuda 7200.9 stores up to 160GB on a single disk. Seagate's 3Gbps SATA interface with NCQ supports Hyper-Threading to increase the performance of SATA servers and workstations that support intensive applications. Seagate NCQ provides command reordering, first-party DMA, and interrupt aggregation.

Thin Client

■ **Wyse Technology** announced its latest thin-client product designed for the Citrix Access Suite, the Wyse S10 thin client. This new product features the Wyse Thin OS version 5.0. This is the latest version of the OS formerly known as Wyse Blazer. The S10 can give users seamless entry into various windows in multiple sessions. It also features fully stateless operation with no data stored locally and plug-and-play installation and configuration. This thin client, which will be available in December, is powered by a Geode microprocessor from AMD.

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Providing Transparent Access To Offline Data

ADIC AMASS 5.5 Puts It All Within Reach

by Tony Bradley

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HARD DRIVES ARE relatively cheap, and hard drive space is quite plentiful compared with years gone by. But still, online data storage is primarily used for applications or data that requires constant or instantaneous access to the data at all times.

On the other side of the coin is offline storage. Typically, offline storage amounts to some sort of tape drive or drive array that can be used to offload large amounts of data from the network and archive it for future reference. Offline storage is fine for system backups or legacy data, but the length of time it takes to acquire data stored offline makes it impractical as a solution for data that may be accessed frequently.

Between these two extremes lies nearline storage. Nearline storage solutions provide a means for taking data off the primary network hard drives but keeping it much more accessible than offloading it to tapes. AMASS 5.5 from ADIC provides seamless, transparent access to storage typically considered offline to make it available in real time.

According to Lance Hukill, ADIC's vice president of software sales, "In simple terms, AMASS provides a file system interface to tertiary storage devices. Because the presentation layer to users and applications is through standard file system operations, this allows easy integration in customer environments. We support a broad set of hosts (operating systems) through which to provide this access, as well as a broad set of storage platforms in which to store data (CD, magneto-optical, UDO, and tape libraries)."

AMASS 5.5 is competing in a market with other vendors all vying for a piece of the growing nearline storage pie. The NearStore R200 from Network Appliance is a strong competitor offering a range of nearline-based applications, including backup and recovery, reference data, online archival, and remote disaster recovery in a network-attached storage appliance. The NetApp NearStore R200, however, provides its own network attached disk drives while the AMASS solution provides a single mount point for transparent access to almost any offline storage, so users can easily access tapes, DVDs, and other archival storage.

Nearline storage provides the speed and performance necessary to make the data useful and relevant but more cost-effectively than online disk drives. Aside from the direct cost benefits, AMASS can grant you live access to archived data and help satisfy regulatory requirements regarding data archiving at the same time.

SNAPSHOT

ADIC AMASS 5.5

Starts at $5,250

Provides a single mount point for transparent access to virtually any offline storage, making tapes, DVDs, and other archival storage easily accessible

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Product Releases

Continued from Page 18

Components

■ **Adaptec** claims to have made the first RAID-on-Chip controllers for the 3Gbps SATA II interface. Its 4-port Serial ATA II RAID 2420SA and 8-port 2820SA are PCI-X cards that support innovative features such as array snapshots, Hot Space (RAID 5EE), and Striped Mirror (RAID 1E). The 2820SA also supports RAIDs 6 and 60, plus Dual Drive Failure Protection. In addition, both units come with 128 to 256MB of ECC DDR; a corresponding cache backup battery unit is optional.

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■ **Tyan** announced its first transitional line of server boards that are designed to take advantage of Dual-Core Intel Xeon processors. With this announcement, Tyan is launching four separate Intel Paxville-ready platforms. These platforms include the Thunder i7520D, a 2-socket tower/pedestal server board; the Thunder i7520RD, a 2-socket rackmount server board for 1U; the Tiger i7320D, a 2-socket compact server board for tower/pedestal; and the Tiger i7320RD, a 2-socket compact server board for 1U. These platforms are expected to be available in Q4.

SOFTWARE

Application & Web Development

■ **Borland Software** announced the release of new versions of Borland Delphi and Borland C++ Builder RAD (rapid application development) environments. The two products are offered with Borland's C# Builder 2006 as part of the Borland Developer Studio. Delphi 2006 includes features such as an enhanced VCL (visual component library), which makes it easier for users to develop applications using GUI. Delphi 2006 also has new productivity features such as Live Templates, which lets users tab through fields and insert points in any template. The upgrades in C++ Builder 2006 also include an updated VCL. Builder 2006 is also a complete Windows solution that offers complete RAD support for C#, Delphi .NET, and Delphi Win32 programs. The Borland Developer Studio is scheduled to ship in early December.

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■ **Quest Software** launched a new application development and database administration environment: Toad For SQL Server 1.0. The development program offers several features, including SQL Editor, which boasts a SQL Procedure editor and modeler and templates. It also has SQL Debugger, which integrates with the SQL Editor and has color-coded breakpoints. SQL Tuning is a feature that automatically handles the SQL statement optimization. Database users will find that the software lets them manage database objects and create queries. The program can handle tasks that span multiple servers. The program supports SQL Server 7.0/2000/2005 and starts at $470.

Business Productivity

■ **Fujitsu** released the Java technology-based Interstage Business Process Manager 7.1, which can help customers streamline their business processes. The latest version of the IBPM is integrated with Fujitsu's Service-Oriented Architecture management platform called CentraSite, which lets customers view system-wide integration metadata. Customers can also convert existing libraries of static Visio diagrams into executable business process applications using the Interstage Business Process Manager. Other features include an easy-to-use GUI and integration with ARIS Business Architect and ARIS Process Performance Manager.

Content Networking

■ **Cisco** introduced its Application Velocity System and Wide-area Application Engine, designed for the end-to-end application networking delivery across remote branches and large data centers. The new offerings are designed to improve application performance, ease infrastructure consolidation, and improve end-user productivity. Remote users working with Cisco's AVS and WAE can experience LAN-like network access over the WAN. The Cisco AVS 3120 is available for $34,995; the Cisco AVS 3180 management station is available for $14,995; and the Cisco WAE starts at $5,500.

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■ **Citrix Systems** launched the latest version of its Citrix NetScaler application delivery product line, designed for small to medium-sized enterprises. The NetScaler Application Delivery Solution offers high-speed layer 4-7 load balancing and application acceleration that enable its customers to deploy both packaged and custom-built applications easily and efficiently. Citrix System's NetScaler Standard Edition lets customers choose between a Web-based GUI or a CLI to provide optimization, SSL offload capabilities, and other application security features. The new offering is available for a single-unit suggested retail price of $17,499.

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Insystek Network Services Management Console

Central Administration & Real-Time Performance Monitoring

by Tony Bradley

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A COMPUTER NETWORK is no small investment. The routers, switches, cabling, storage, servers, and other equipment that go into the network cost a lot of money to purchase and deploy. It makes sense then that companies would also want to protect and monitor that investment to make sure it is operating efficiently and providing the most return on investment possible.

The problem with many network monitoring solutions is that they require that some sort of agent software or application be installed on various devices and computer systems in order to communicate back to the monitoring software. This requirement actually adds to the burden of monitoring the network rather than making it simpler or more efficient.

Insystek has solved that dilemma with its NSMC (Network Services Management Console) product. Alex Turner, a senior applications architect with Insystek, says, "Insystek solutions are completely and truly agentless. Our solutions are not hybrid agents or SNMP-based, and neither do they use invasive methods (network share, login scripts, etc.). All Insystek solutions provide built-in failover and redundancy and are extremely secure due to their agentless architecture. They implement rapidly and scale from tens of systems to tens of thousands."

The Insystek NSMC provides an array of useful features to help monitor and maintain a network infrastructure. The NSMC monitors both servers and desktops to provide real-time performance and availability information. It will proactively monitor services and processes and notify technicians or administrators via pager, email, or other methods if a problem arises.

The NSMC can be used to perform a full network discovery and audit of connected devices as well as providing detailed information that can be used to maintain licensing compliance. One of the best features of the NSMC is that it also includes the ability to deploy software applications, patches, and updates, allowing network administrators to more efficiently manage and maintain their networks without having to resort to buying and implementing even more applications.

Products such as GFI Network Server Monitor or ipMonitor 7.5 from ipMonitor also let network administrators proactively monitor network and server performance as well as automatically recover from faults without the need for any agent software on the client machines. Turner believes that Insystek's NSMC product stands apart from the crowd, however, due to "a rich set of features unequaled by our competitors including built-in failover and redundancy, security, rapid implementations, and scalability."

SNAPSHOT

Insystek Network Services Management Console

Price: $1,495 (client access licenses are $24 each)

Provides a cost-effective, efficient solution for monitoring, administering, and maintaining a corporate network

www.Processor.com/Insystek

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Product Releases

Continued from Page 19

Messaging & Groupware

■ **Extended Systems** announced the release of OneBridge Mobile Groupware Version 5.0, a scalable wireless email solution that brings commercial-grade capabilities to organizations deploying email to the field. Version 5.0 supports more than 100 mobile devices, simplifies the end-user experience, and supplies IT with tools to monitor the deployment from any location.

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■ **Intellisync** announced the new Intellisync IM solution for Symbian OS smartphone users. Intellisync IM provides Symbian mobile device users with an IM experience much like that on a PC, with a familiar user interface, real-time IM exchange, and content exchange, including pictures, appointments, documents, and more. The Intellisync IM server is hosted over a company's corporate network as a way to provide users with secure, always-on, wireless access to the company's Microsoft Live Communications Server or Jabber installation and also to public IM networks. The Intellisync IM Enterprise Server, which is hosted on the corporate network, provides an IM gateway to mobile devices of various operating systems.

Network & Systems Management

■ **Accellion** has released version 4 of Accellion Courier Standard and Accellion Courier Enterprise, which provide a secure, inexpensive alternative to file transfer methods such as email and FTP. According to Accellion, Courier Standard is ideal for single sites with medium- to high-volume users, and Courier Enterprise includes features such as intelligent replication, failover, and clustering for multiside load balancing, making it useful for multisite and high-volume users. Both editions also have the following features: multiple file uploading, SSL certificate generation, ion cube encoding, LDAP/Active Directory V2, and email agent support.

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■ Wise Package Studio 6.0 from **Altiris** includes impact assessment and patch risk capabilities to assist with error-free patch rollouts. In addition to a Web-based installation capture tool, Wise Package Studio 6.0 offers the following benefits: a revision control system that halts users from making conflicting changes to packages and can roll back packages to earlier versions; server-side processing and task management support; and enhanced conflict management capabilities. Available in the fourth quarter, the software will cost $4,599 per seat. Volume discounts will be available.

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■ **BrightTools** added several enhancements to the latest version of its Activeworx security information management software. Activeworx 2.6 includes a new configuration wizard that can compile seven network configurations, including database creation. The program includes support for Tipping Point, Apple OS X, CyberGuard, Sonicwall, and OpenBSD. Activeworx also has more support for reporting and includes graphs and tasks, and support for compliance with the GLBA, HIPAA, and Sarbanes-Oxley. The program supports advanced scheduling for compliance reports. It is available starting at $1,995.

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■ ControlTower Console Management System 3.L from **Carlo Gavazzi Computing Solutions** is a Linux-exclusive tool targeted toward data centers, ISPs, and telecommunications and financial services industries. The software uses PAM to verify users and uses 128-bit Twofish encryption to let remote users securely exchange data with a server. IT managers can use ControlTower Console Management System 3.L to restrict system access according to IP address, Unix account, or password. A managed device system log facilitates multileveled filtering and access logging. Prices for ControlTower 3.L start at $800.

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■ **Citrix Systems** has introduced GoToAssist 7, the latest edition of its remote technical support software solution. GoToAssist 7 includes the Manager's Dashboard for managers to track incoming queries and monitor the activity of teams and representatives. Expanded team management capabilities can break teams into tiers or subteams to provide higher customer satisfaction and more effectively track performance goals. Citrix also added a combined phone and Web mode, so a single GoToAssist login allows users to coordinate both connection methods from one control panel. 128-bit, end-to-end AES data encryption ensures all sessions comply with Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, and GLBA.

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■ **RTO** announced its Optimization Console, a new tool for Citrix Presentation Server 4.0, TScale, and TScale Advanced deployment. With the RTO Optimization Console, you have memory optimization tuning that is not available in Citrix Presentation Server, such as component exclusion list management, optimization history reporting, and optimization scheduling.

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■ **StarNet's** Recon-X is an application for X servers such as X-Win32 and Exceed. It allows sysadmins to suspend and resume remote Unix and Linux application sessions, recover crashed sessions, and transfer sessions from one workstation to another. StarNet also says that, using compression and other techniques, Recon-X significantly speeds up remote management tasks as compared to previous utilities of this sort. The Windows software currently supports SuSE, Red Hat, and Solaris host platforms.

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■ **Symantec** extended the capabilities of Veritas Cluster Server to include full support for replication solutions including EMC SRDF (including SRDF/A), EMC MirrorView, Hitachi TrueCopy, HP Continuous Access XP, the IBM High-Availability Disaster Recovery capability of DB2 Universal Database and the IBM Peer to Peer Remote Copy capability of IBM Enterprise Storage Server, NetApp SnapMirror, Oracle DataGuard, and the Veritas Volume Replicator product. By combining Veritas Cluster Server with data replication, customers can achieve and maintain greater data center availability. Clustering software automates the process of brining up storage, servers, and applications and redirects clients to a secondary data set in the event of a disruption or disaster. By combining clustering and replication, organizations can recover from an outage or disaster in minutes, not days or weeks with a manual process. Veritas Cluster Server is priced starting at $2,995. Pricing for the replication solutions mentioned start at $995.

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Go to Page 21, Column 1

Product Releases

Continued from Page 20

■ **Verifichi** introduced the latest version of the company's flagship product, ITVerify 2.6.2. The product is designed for change surveillance, asset management, and policy-based compliance and includes enhancements in the areas of user role security, text search, and email alerts, among many others. ITVerify is now certified on Linux ES platforms, allowing users to perform all of the functionalities of ITVerify Agent and Agentless configurations. Additional platforms supported include: AIX 5.2; HP-UX 11.i; Solaris 8 and 9; and Win2000/2003 Server/XP.

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■ **Visual Networks** announced Select Bandwidth Manager for the Citrix Presentation Server, software designed to provide in-depth visibility into applications that were published using Citrix's ICA (Independent Computing Architecture) protocol. With the offering network administrators can, from both remote and local locations, identify bandwidth utilization on a per-user, per-application scale. They also have end-to-end visibility of all applications, both Citrix-published and non-Citrix applications, on their network. This capability will make it easier for administrators to pinpoint potential performance issues and diagnose the location of the problem, whether it is end-user, network, or server based. Select Bandwidth Manager for Citrix Presentation Server will be available early next year starting at a price of $2,500 per site.

Security

■ The latest version of **Cybertrust's** Risk Commander compliance management software boasts several new enhancements, including the My Tasks Workflow system, which monitors individual employee work on compliance requirements. Risk Commander 2.4 also includes a beefed up Adaptive Survey Module that, according to Cybertrust, reduces time spent on questionnaires. It also includes Remedied Scoring, which prioritizes remediation activities via Risk Commander's scoring rules. The program helps companies support the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and HIPAA. Risk Commander lets users tie assessments and remediation to proof of compliance.

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■ **Funk Software** announced its suite of network security products designed to protect access to the network. Designed for businesses of all sizes, the new endpoint protection products are standards-based and include Steel-Belted Radius/Endpoint Assurance to authenticate users and allow access; the 802.1X supplicant Odyssey Client for letting outside users request access permission; and Trusted Network Connect-compliant security software modules that work with other vendor's systems, such as Symantec, McAfee, and PatchLink to gather security information about the endpoint. The new offerings include multiple preconfiguration, deployment, and client lock down tools to help customers tailor the product to fit their needs.

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■ **Reflex Security** introduced the Reflex IPS MG, a multigigabit intrusion prevention solution. The Reflex IPS MG identifies, analyzes, and responds to both internal and external security threats in real time by using threat detection and prevention techniques while operating in-line at speeds up to 5Gbps. In the process, the Reflex IPS MG eliminates the trade-off between effective security and scalable performance. The Reflex IPS MG outperforms other solutions by leveraging wire-speed, multigigabit packet handling architecture that utilizes ASIC load balancing. The Reflex IPS MG combines a powerful, centralized configuration and management console, customizable reporting tools, and real-time threat protection into one unified solution.

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■ **Websense** released the latest version of the Websense Enterprise software. Websense Enterprise version 6.1 gives users the ability to easily customize filtering options. It also features enhanced real-time security updates, on-screen alerts when activities outside of policy parameters are being performed, and Websense's remote filtering application. This lets enterprises apply their Internet usage policies to mobile users and protects them from external security threats that could be introduced by users outside a network's traditional boundaries. Websense also announced Websense Corporate Edition, a suite that includes capabilities for administrative, reporting, auditing, logging, and alerting tasks. Also included is a remote administration feature that lets administrative tasks and policy-setting be assigned to users in different offices, cities, or countries.

Storage

■ **DataCore Software** announced an update to SANmelody 2.0 to offer iSCSI users with a full range of SAN features and network storage appliances. The update features VSS support for SQL Server, Exchange 2003, and Windows 2003 file systems. With the update, iSCSI users can take advantage of the following features: enhanced Windows Disk Volume Administration to serve preformatted Windows NTFS/FAT file and data disks from a central point over iSCSI, backup and disaster recovery for Microsoft VSS-aware application, and automated Virtual Capacity provisioning over iSCSI. DataCore claims the update will make it possible to build scalable, affordable SANs with standard IP networks and LANs using iSCSI protocols.

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Storage

■ **QLogic** announced QLogic Global Services, a suite of in-region, local language telephone and email support for QLogic switches and host bus adapters. With this offering, QLogic also announced onsite service programs. QLogic Global Services are made possible by a strategic relationship with Lucent Technologies. The QLogic Global Services are available to resellers and end users in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America, Japan, and North America. For customers who want to expand their coverage, QLogic is offering the SAN Pro Prime, SAN Pro Select, and SAN Pro Exchange service programs worldwide. SAN Pro Prime includes 24/7 call center support, four-hour onsite service, and four-hour advance replacement. SAN Pro Select includes 8x5 call center support, next business day onsite service, and next business day hardware replacement. SAN Pro Exchange is the basic offering which includes a three-year extended factory warranty, 8/5 call center support, and next business day advance hardware replacement.

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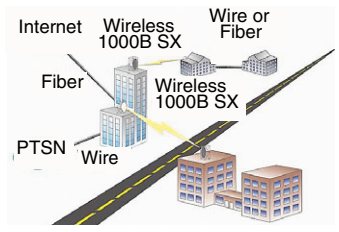

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OPINIONS
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Focusing On Real-World Problems

This week I gave a couple of sessions and a day-long ADO.NET workshop at VSLive in Orlando. These trips give me a chance to get away from the office and out into the real world. I find it essential to hear about the problems faced by developers working with the old, the new, the borrowed, and the blown technologies. Along the way I eat and visit with as many different groups of people as possible, as well as network with the other speakers. We trade stories and solutions and try to get a better understanding of what we should be telling our customers.

A number of common threads seem to tie these anecdotal cases together: Systems evolve over time and are often sewn together with spit, bailing wire, and COM. When companies combine, they inherit the applications and staff from their new partner. It's like marrying a woman with a collection of Duncan Fife heirlooms; you have to figure out how to get her furniture to blend into your 1970s chrome and steel motif. Sometimes it might seem easier to find another wife.

Does it really make sense to have a single block of source be all things to all systems?

Striking A Balance Between New & Trusted Code

Even when you work with your own company's applications that have developed over time, you're faced with the problem of getting new systems to interact with existing ones. It's a never-ending process. As each new fangled "universal solution" arrives, you have to balance the reality of your budget with the demands of the new features your staff and customers demand. Should you launch off and try this new technology? Many technical managers say the people they are trying to educate see the .NET tools and languages the same way a toddler sees a flash of metal in the sand. It's new, shiny, and fun, and the first thing they try to do with it is stuff it into their mouth. The managers know from experience that these sparkly objects might be land mines. What's bright and new is often untried, inexperienced, and unable to solve the problems.

We mentors and IT development managers have to figure out which of the new tools and interfaces can really help solve our problems. We need to ask: Should we try to create a single block of code that works to replace the existing code across all of the existing systems, or do we try to link these disparate systems together? Does it really make sense to have a single block of source be all things to all systems, or should we build a cohesive (albeit custom) set of code that deals with the specific reality of the platform?

Focus On What Matters Most To Developers

Every company I've worked with over the years has tried to leverage its investment in hardware, software, and (most importantly) skills to solve these problems. At the last SDR, I encouraged Microsoft to stabilize the development tools. In order for management or mentors to understand what works best, we all must get and stay up to speed on what the vendors (like Microsoft) have to offer and what experts and users (the consumers) outside Microsoft have to say about it.

Based on the increased number of Microsoft folks speaking at conferences nowadays, I suspect that Microsoft is worried that the message being given to developers and their managers by third-party speakers is not on target. Case in point: The VSLive conference devoted an entire hour to MARS (Multiple Active Result Sets), and they plan to repeat this session several times in upcoming conferences.

Microsoft encouraged these topics and provided the speakers, but it seems strange to me that it would want to waste time on it. MARS has many unresolved issues; I would have expected Microsoft to spend more time on the important issues that impact more developers. One of the most common problems deals with how ADO.NET 1.0 and 1.1 mismanage the connection pool. Version 2.0 fixes most of these problems, but none of the Microsoft speakers I heard discussed the new connection pooling work incorporated in the 2.0 Framework.

Very few applications failed or could not be written because MARS was not available, but thousands of developers find that their connection pool overflows during production. Microsoft worked hard to fix these pooling issues, but I guess bug fixes don't have the same marketing appeal as MARS. After all, Oracle has had it for years; SQL Server did not. Microsoft needs to stop worrying about shapes for its .NET taillights and start figuring out what makes the cruise control disable the brakes at 85mph.

WILLIAM (BILL) VAUGHN

AUTHOR

William (Bill) Vaughn is an industry-recognized author, mentor, and subject-matter expert with more than 30 years in the computing industry as a developer, manager, trainer, marketer, and writer. After 14 years at Microsoft, Vaughn stepped away to work on his new books, in addition to mentoring and leading training seminars. He's written six editions of the "Hitchhiker's Guide to Visual Basic and SQL Server" and two editions of "ADO.NET and ADO Examples and Best Practices for Visual Basic Programmers." He and Peter Blackburn just finished "Hitchhiker's Guide to SQL Server 2000 Reporting Services."

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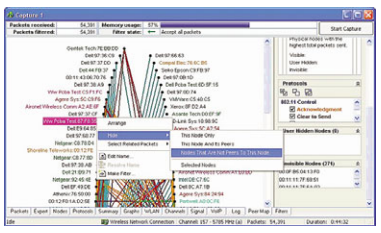

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OPINIONS
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Techno-Bill Lives In Nebraska

Ever heard of the comic strip "Dilbert"? My intuition tells me if you're reading this column, you've not only heard of it but swear Scott Adams works for your company. One of my favorite strips stars Dilbert boasting of his superior collection of personal communication electronics until a chance encounter, reminiscent of an old Western shootout, with . . . (*pause for suspense*) Techno-Bill. Alas, our protagonist is defeated in the final frame when Techno-Bill outdraws him with a well-timed fax from his holster of speed dials.

I thought it was only a cartoon until a few weeks ago when I met one of the senior IT professionals for our state government. His appearance was slightly off-kilter when translated into a third dimension, but the belt full of toys told the story. The real Techno-Bill lives in Nebraska. He carried not one trio of pager/cell phone/PDA, but two! The reason? It is against company policy for him to use the electronics for any nonbusiness use. He had to have separate devices for business use and personal use. As much as I understand the intent of this type of policy, it ultimately limits the effectiveness of your deployment. I contend, if you want to increase productivity in your company, consider relaxing your stance and letting employees use technology for personal use, especially with tools like cell phones and PDAs.

Ability, utilization, and productivity are directly correlated.

Pointy-Haired Boss

The true worth of any technology is determined by how well it is utilized. I do not care how amazingly feature-laden a technology may be; if its intended end users are unwilling or unable to use those features, they add no value. And let's face it, there are a lot of end users out there with the technical competence of the pointy-haired boss. That is not intended to be a criticism of end users; they just have skills in other areas. It would be like me trying to work in accounting. I know about as much about a fixed asset accrual as they know about IPsec transforms.

The solution lies in finding ways to make end users want to use the technology. If they want to use it, their ability to use it will flourish on its own. Ability, utilization, and productivity are directly correlated. As a user's ability increases, his utilization of the technology increases, and the productivity impact of that technology is fully realized. We find one of the best ways to increase that desire to use a technology is to let them use the technology in their personal lives. As an example, we have recently invested pretty heavily in the Treo 650, a Palm-based PDA and cell phone all in one device. The intended business advantage is clear: The Treo gives our users anytime, virtually anywhere, voice and data connectivity.

But how much is that technology really worth if the employee is unwilling to strap it to his belt? I'll even admit if the only calls I ever receive on the phone were work-related, it would get "accidentally" forgotten a little more frequently. If, however, the employee has a personal interest vested in carrying that phone, she is far more likely to take it everywhere she goes. We encourage our employees to use the phone for reasonable personal use. They are thrilled to death. They have the coolest cell phone on the block and it does not cost them a thing. We are thrilled to death because now that they gave the phone number to their significant other, set a reminder for their mother's birthday, and emailed their bowling team captain, we know they will carry the phone, learn how to add contacts, figure out the calendar, check their messages, and so on.

Dogbert's New Ruling Class

"Aha!" you might be thinking. I said "reasonable use"; define "reasonable." I just did. We simply say "reasonable" and trust the judgment of our employees. If you treat people like adults, they generally act like adults. If you treat people like miscreant children, they generally act like miscreant children. I will not try to pretend there aren't exceptions, but think of it this way: Would you rather deal with a couple bad exceptions or only have a couple good exceptions?

Regardless of your policies, the ultimate responsibility of using a technology lies with the user, not the technology. I believe a company's overall productivity will increase more from the good use of well-intentioned users by relaxing policies than it will by attempting to prevent bad use with additional restrictions. Are there exceptions to my "new ruling class" gospel? Certainly. In some cases the potential for even one misuse of the technology outweighs any potential gains. Just understand where policy ends and reality begins. True security begins with understanding what you can and cannot control. In the meantime, why don't you take that cell phone out of its holster and give Mom(bert) a call?

Send your comments to mike@processor.com

MICHAEL DEMPSEY

AUTHOR *Michael Dempsey is the information technology manager of Sandhills Publishing and technical editor of* Processor *magazine. He has more than a decade of experience in voice and data communications and holds current CCNP and CCDP certifications. Dempsey is an expert in network security, virtual private networks, and IT infrastructure.*

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Guarding Against Electronic Disasters

Hackers and attackers are targeting backup systems by planting malicious code on production systems whose payload lies dormant until copied to a storage server. The goal of code planting is to make it difficult to restore systems using backup data during an attack.

Data Decontamination & Validation

Most enterprise IT shops will set up a hot site to house a mirror image of critical corporate data. But that won't protect against code planting, a little-known technique where attackers infiltrate primary and secondary sites at the same time.

When experts talk about storage security, they usually mean encrypting the wire between the host and backup system, or fortifying the hot site so that attackers can't enter. Yet enterprises may be susceptible to a less obvious threat—one designed to sneak into mirrored sites during routine backups. If predictable backup procedures are in place, attackers can place malicious code into operating systems, programmed to launch at a later time and after one or more routine backups have occurred.

More chief information security officers are guarding against electronic disasters amid warnings that sophisticated cyber attackers are taking aim at backup systems. In many ways a cyber threat like this one flips the concept of maintaining a hot site on its head. In the 1990s and into this decade, many companies created hot sites, also called disaster recovery or failover sites, to guard against physical failures caused by natural disasters or even terrorist attacks. In these scenarios physical distance between the primary and backup data center is the paramount concern, and the integrity of the data being backed up is assumed.

W. Curtis Preston, vice president of data protection services at GlassHouse Consulting, says such threats raise a question about the use of replication for backup. By definition, when you replicate, you take a snapshot of your data and overwrite the previous version. "If the data is corrupted, you can't go back in time. It's a forward-only mechanism," Preston says. "Even if a virus has a payload that doesn't hit for three weeks, I should be able to find out when the payload got here and restore [a system image] from before that."

Be Proactive

As your risk profile changes, your prevention and remediation techniques have to change with it. CDW storage and security experts recommend a range of adjustments to back up procedures to guard against code planting.

Hash library. Creating a hash library for key system files, such as executables and DLLs, is a smart idea because infecting system files is the most effective way for attackers to spread malicious code quickly and take down systems. Hashing assigns a set of letters and numbers to a file, using a mathematical algorithm. If even one character inside the file changes, a new set of letters and numbers is assigned, signifying that the file has been altered. When deploying this validation technique, updates to system files should occur in controlled environments and should only be performed by authorized personnel.

However, it isn't practical to hash all the data files you back up, and it may cause latency problems. The hash library would be enormous, and because files change for legitimate reasons, placing a period inside a Word document, for instance, would change the hash mark.

Automated replication software, by its very design, only copies data blocks and files that have been changed since the last backup. It doesn't know whether the changed data is good or bad. Similarly, a hash mark only tells a user whether a file has changed, not whether the change was benign or malicious.

Diversification. Diversifying operating environments provides another line of defense. An attack designed for a specific OS (such as Microsoft's Windows or Apache) can't be repeated on backup systems. For example, many application firewalls run different OSes than Windows, such as Linux or a proprietary operating environment. Using such a firewall on your backup systems forces the attacker to "break through layers."

Backing up. Make frequent and duplicate copies of corporate databases and run data-integrity, and compare programs each time someone performs a backup. Brian Zitterkopf, a systems engineer with responsibility for databases and storage at Calpine, the electrical power company, guards against code planting and other threats by making frequent and duplicate copies of key corporate data, with the company's databases getting the most attention. Calpine maintains a standby database on premises. At specific intervals, that data is backed up to disk arrays that are dismounted and taken offline to keep them safe.

The concept of moving data farther away from its source and timing files for expiration based on regulatory and audit rules is called data lifecycle management. Intelligent archiving platforms may provide a safeguard for critical historical and archival data. Once data is written to the system's ATA disks, it cannot be altered. And after data expires for audit purposes, it is automatically erased. "It helps ensure data integrity and compliance," Zitterkopf says.

Send your comments to CDW@processor.com

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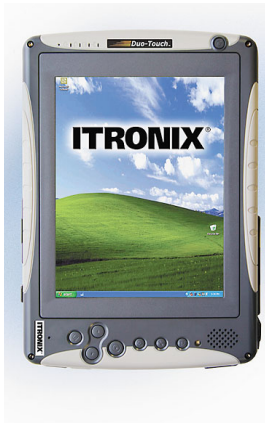

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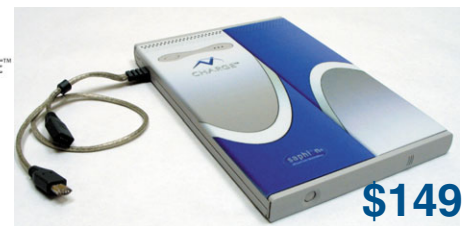

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Is Outsourcing Overhyped?

The Reality Behind The Trend In Today's IT World

by Sixto Ortiz Jr.

• • •

NO OTHER BUSINESS term provokes as much emotion as outsourcing. Some believe the practice is downright traitorous to the American worker, while others believe fierce global competition is compelling businesses to seek out the most competitively priced labor pools possible. Both sides of such a polarizing issue will never see eye to eye, but one thing they can certainly agree on is that outsourcing is here to stay.

But is outsourcing truly paying huge dividends for businesses that have embraced it? Are the captured savings greater than the challenges of managing culturally different workforces located far away from company headquarters? Or has outsourcing received an inordinate amount of hype that didn't quite measure up to reality? Let's take a look.

Outsourcing Defined

A 2005 study by CAPS Research and A.T. Kearney provides useful definitions for two terms that are often used interchangeably when outsourcing is discussed: outsourcing and offshoring. According to the study "Outsourcing Strategically for Sustainable Competitive Advantage," outsourcing is a make-or-buy decision where a business chooses to purchase an item or service that was previously made in-house. For example, when a business outsources its customer service function, it chooses to purchase that service from a specialized third-party provider.

On the other hand, offshoring occurs when a business chooses to operate outside its home country's boundaries. A customer service function may be offshored from a domestic site to a foreign country, but it is still performed by employees who work for the business, albeit at a foreign location.

Of course, detractors will proclaim—perhaps rightfully so, depending on where you stand on the issue—that the effect from both practices is the same on workers whose jobs are affected. Those displaced by a business decision are still displaced, and it doesn't matter whether the company chose to continue performing the activity or pay to have a third-party supplier do it for them.

Outsourcing Today

Even though outsourcing is widely believed to yield immediate cost savings, the reality is many hidden costs are often overlooked in the rush to outsource. According to the Info-Tech Research Group 2005 study "Special Report: Outsourcing in Mid-Sized Enterprises," over half of all outsourcing projects fail to meet expectations.

Factors that lead to the failure of outsourcing initiatives in midsized enterprises, according to the report, include the development of poorly defined, unrealistic, and unachievable objectives; the appearance of hidden costs for services not considered during initial negotiations; poorly defined outsourcing scope; and insufficient resources dedicated to managing the outsourcing relationship.

Here's another interesting finding from Info-Tech: 75% of midsized enterprises that outsourced last year did so domestically and did not go offshore to launch their outsourcing efforts. IT functions getting outsourced, the report reveals, include application development, Web design, and application maintenance.

The Impact Of Outsourcing

The specter of outsourcing, whether real or imagined, is taking a toll on the number of college students seeking degrees in IT. Frank Scavo, president of Computer Economics, a research and advisory firm focused on the strategic and financial management of information systems, says many of the jobs that are being sent offshore are the entry-level positions that are natural for new graduates in computer science, such as programming and technical writing.

Scavo says his firm is already seeing a tightening of the job market for IT professionals, and the fewer number of new graduates is part of the problem, he warns. Even though the law of supply and demand will take care of the problem, adds Scavo, the tightening of the job market for IT professionals may cause even more jobs to move offshore as businesses who need the expertise encounter fewer resources available in the United States.

Also, Scavo believes that offshore outsourcing, in combination with the overall downturn in tech hiring that occurred earlier in the decade, is causing many IT professionals to give up careers in IT. Many of these professionals have not returned to IT, says Scavo, even in the face of a recent IT job market recovery.

Is Outsourcing Losing Its Luster?

But these clearly negative impacts of offshore outsourcing are not having a negative effect on the use of outsourcing by businesses, reveals an informal Web site survey conducted by Computer Economics. According to the results of this survey, 33% of respondents are already offshore outsourcing and plan to do even more in the future. While 50% have no plans to do so at this time, 11% are not doing so but are planning to in the near future, while only 6% of respondents are planning to do less outsourcing. These results, believes Computer Economics, indicate businesses will pursue further offshore outsourcing in the near future.

Outsourcing opponents, however, can take heart in the July 2005 Deloitte study "Calling A Change in the Outsourcing Market," which reveals that many enterprises are taking a closer look at outsourcing after experiencing less than stellar results. According to this study, 70% of survey respondents reported negative experiences with outsourcing projects; 25% brought outsourced functions back in-house, while 44% did not capture the expected costs savings from their outsourcing projects.

So what happened? While 70% of survey participants cited cost savings as a driver for embracing outsourcing, 38% of these participants paid additional, hidden costs for services not included in their contracts. The 57% of participants who cited the need to implement best practices, quality, and innovation when establishing outsourcing relationships responded at a 31% clip that once contracts were signed, outsourcing vendors became complacent.

Other problems cited include excessive rigidity from binding contracts that prevent flexibility when changes are required and the discovery that vendors did not have the capabilities to provide the expected level of quality and costs savings.

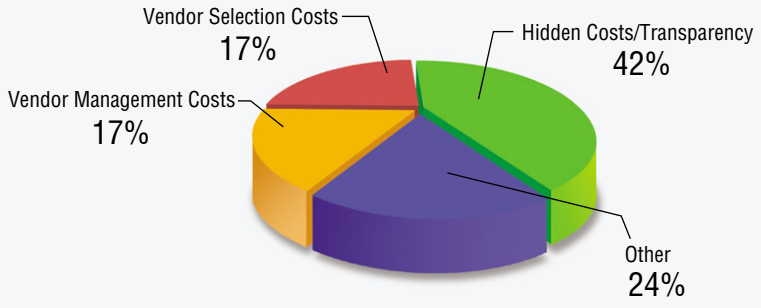
The Hype & The Truth Behind Outsourcing

The statistics collected by various research firms and market analysts reveal that while businesses are encountering a dose of reality regarding their outsourcing arrangements, the outsourcing trend will continue. Outsourcing can provide benefits, but only if businesses realize that hidden management costs may put a damper on rosy cost savings expectations fueled by the hype that has tended to surround outsourcing.

To be successful, Info-Tech's report advises businesses to outsource for the right reasons, take a formal and structured approach to the task, and be sure to establish sound governance mechanisms to manage the outsourcing relationship. Businesses must eliminate their expectations of outsourcing as a "set it and leave it" proposition; instead, successful outsourcing requires management commitment and oversight.

Outsourcing Risks Related To Costs

Hidden costs/transparency is the most common cost-related risk for firms that outsource.



SOURCE: DELOITTE CONSULTING OUTSOURCING STUDY, OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2004

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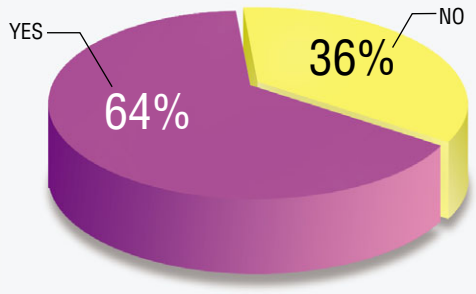

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Upgrading To Microsoft Office 2003

Analyze Your Small To Midsized Enterprise's Needs Prior To Making The Jump

by Will Kelly

• • •

While most Microsoft Office headlines today tout the upcoming Office 12 beta, many SMEs are still using Microsoft Office 2000 or even Office 97 as their Desktop productivity suite. However, as user needs change and Microsoft drops official support for older versions of Office, you may be considering an upgrade to Office 2003.

The launch of Microsoft Office 2003 took the Office productivity suite out of its traditional Desktop territory and into the corporate enterprise. Now, Microsoft Office is rebranded, as the Microsoft Office 2003 System encompasses other applications such as Microsoft Project and Visio plus server side components such as Windows SharePoint Services 2003.

Behind The Move To Office 2003

Typically, the reasoning behind an organization moving to Microsoft Office 2003 goes beyond the user desktop into the enterprise environment. Drivers such as improved document security and collaboration top the list for SMEs wanting to make the move to Office 2003.

When asked about his customers' moves to Office 2003, Tom Rash, president of Northwest Computer Systems, says he sees "customers starting to talk about collaboration with Windows SharePoint Services 2003." The introduction of collaborative services brings in business drivers to the upgrade decision to go to Microsoft Office 2003. Unlike previous versions of Microsoft Office, Rash sees a "link to the business in drivers to upgrade to Microsoft Office 2003."

President of Harrison Technology Consulting Jason Harrison also sees business processes behind the move to Office 2003. He takes a consultative approach with Office 2003 and Windows SharePoint Services 2003 with his customers. "Moving to Office 2003 is a paradigm shift, and the feature benefits of Microsoft Office 2003 and SharePoint are measurable because of the capability of sharing documents and the rich feature set."

The Transition

It can sometimes be hard to wrap yourself around all the changes in Office 2003, especially when you factor in the integration with Windows SharePoint Services 2003. You can make the transition with your internal staff if you have the right skill sets already onboard, or you can bring in an outside consulting firm to provide the expertise.

Clients with potential Microsoft Office 2003/SharePoint transition projects typically bring in Harrison Technology Consulting to demonstrate solutions. The outside consulting firm approach is worth exploring if your IT staff is overburdened and you are seeking a "proof of concept" to verify if the Office 2003 system matches your business needs. An outside consulting firm can also help you analyze your current business processes and adapt them to the Microsoft Office 2003 system.

Chris Butler, network engineer for Northwest Computer Systems, points to deploying Office 2003 with a local point install as a best practice for making the transition. A local point install of Office 2003 copies all of the Office 2003 files over to the local hard drive, meaning when a user needs to add an Office component there is no need to pull the file from a shared network drive or other installation routine.

Making the jump to Office 2003 can be either a long jump from Office 2000 or an even longer jump from Office 97. Butler points to potential issues with legacy Access 97 and Access 2000 databases during an Office 2003 upgrade. However, a number of tools and documentation are available for this transition on Microsoft Office Online (office.microsoft.com).

Supporting Users

Microsoft Office sometimes plays a larger role in the daily job of an end user that the IT department may not realize. The end user transition to Office 2003 takes place on multiple fronts. Your deployment plan should take into account such upgrade events as the significant changes in the Microsoft Office Outlook 2003 user interface. Upgrading user macros, templates, and other customizations also needs to factor into your deployment plan.

Harrison stresses the importance of user education/outreach during an Office 2003 upgrade and says, "The missing piece of an Office 2003 upgrade is to introduce users to what's new in the Office 2003 applications and how they can do their jobs better." You should also expect a spike in help desk calls during and for the first month after your SME's upgrade to Microsoft Office 2003.

Lessons Learned

In Rash and Harrison's experience with deploying Microsoft Office 2003 across multiple SMEs, each stresses the importance of planning prior to the deployment. Take Windows SharePoint Services 2003, typically an integral driver for upgrading to Microsoft Office 2003, for example. A "build it and they will come" approach to implementing Windows SharePoint Services isn't going to bring it to the end users. SharePoint needs a champion, owner, and evangelist to work with the user community to adopt SharePoint so your SME can realize the productivity enhancements and return on investment.

Make The Upgrade

The upgrade to Microsoft Office 2003 has a number of different considerations and requirements compared to making the upgrade among previous versions of Microsoft Office. Planning your Office 2003 upgrade and working closely with your user community can help make the upgrade go smoothly for the IT group and end users.

Office 2003 Advantages

Microsoft Office 2003 includes a number of advantages over previous Office versions.

- Integration opportunities for back-end applications
- Improved security over previous versions of Microsoft Office
- XML support
- Sharing Office documents and other files through Windows SharePoint Services 2003
- More advanced tools within the applications such as improved mail merge and other wizards

By The Numbers

Some industry experts say Microsoft Office's biggest competitor is itself. Here are some statistics from the Gartner Group:

45	Percentage of larger enterprises still using Office 2000
10	Percentage using the current Office 2003
15	Percentage of enterprises still using Office 97

Why The Hesitation?

Here are a few factors that may be holding companies back from upgrading to Office 2003.

- Microsoft Office 2003 is still on the individual licensing level, not on a Microsoft business licensing plan such as Open Value
- No business requirements for online collaboration
- Issues with Microsoft Office licensing plans
- Microsoft Office is viewed as a supplementary or supporting application and not part of an organization's mission

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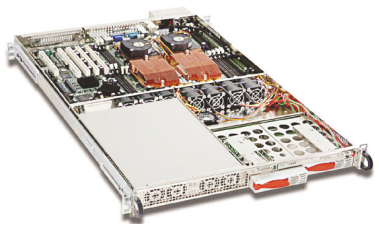

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Preparing For An Overseas Business Trip

Tips & Tools To Equip IT Travelers

by Dean Takahashi

• • •

INTERNATIONAL TRAVELING isn't as hard as it used to be when it comes to staying connected. Hermann Eul, head of the communications business for Germany's chipmaker Infineon Technologies, still carries around a telephone jack attached to a pair of alligator clips. It's a product of the days when unreliable narrowband phone lines were often the only way he could get in touch with his home office. "I haven't used it in years, but I always keep it with me," says Eul, who travels extensively through Europe, Asia, and North America. "It's getting easier and easier."

Now Eul can access high-speed Internet even when he's flying in a Lufthansa jet thousands of feet above the earth's surface. The FlyNet broadband service is expensive at $10 per half hour or $30 per flight, but the cost to his company can often be greater when he's out of touch. And when he needs to make a phone call without incurring expensive hotel line fees, he uses his VoIP software such as the freely available Skype on his laptop with a $20 microphone. The quality of the free voice connection is usually just as good as any other phone.

Executives such as Eul are part of the brave new world of IT-enabled traveling, and keeping him supported is an important task for the Infineon IT department. IT departments have to equip executives, salespeople, and other business travelers to be productive when they're on the road. Above all, that means they need to enable them to communicate abroad as if they were at their usual offices. They have to equip a traveler with a laptop or other device to access broadband communications efficiently, inexpensively, and conveniently.

Worldwide Connectivity

In Europe and Asia, mobile Internet communication is often more ubiquitous than it is in North America. In Europe many hotels have their own Ethernet lines or even Wi-Fi wireless Internet such as 802.11b in lobbies, business centers, and guest rooms. Hotel concierges can supply access codes for guests to sign on to the Internet. Internet cafes are popular in places such as China, and Starbucks coffee houses offer Wi-Fi connections. You can search for Internet cafes at sites such as cybercaptive .com, which tracks more than 5,000 Internet cafes in 161 countries.

It's a good idea for a traveler to carry an access password for a worldwide Wi-Fi connectivity service, such as T-Mobile, so she doesn't have to always sign in with a credit card number in every location where she uses paid Wi-Fi services. Only a few airlines such as Air Canada and Lufthansa are using Boeing's airborne Internet access, so travelers should check with the airline if they really want to use the Internet on the plane.

Travelers must also be able to communicate in a secure fashion so that sensitive company information doesn't fall into the wrong hands. The traveler must be able to tap technologies such as virtual private networks to access the enterprise network. But IT managers should take care to ensure that there are no passwords cached on a machine under the "remember password" functions so that thieves can have an easy time with a stolen machine, says Rob Enderle, an analyst at the Enderle Group. "VPNs are a secure pipeline from you to your company," he says. "But they're also a way for someone to plant a virus on the company network."

Laptops should be insured and password protected, but it's important to remember there are limitations to the strength of the encryption technology that can be taken outside the United States. Travelers should remove sensitive documents from their laptops before leaving the country. They can also register their laptops before they leave with the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol to minimize interrogation upon returning to the country.

Pack Accordingly

When travelers go abroad, they must often take converters for electrical outlets. Across the globe there are nine different electrical outlets in use. So if you pick up an adaptor at the local electronics store, make sure that its usage includes the country or region you are going to. If you're traveling across several countries, you may want to take an all-in-one adaptor. European outlets often use 220 volts while U.S. outlets run on 110 volts. So not only do you need an adaptor to fit your plug into a jack, you also need to make sure you have the step-down transformer to reduce the voltage. If you plug a U.S. laptop into a European outlet without an adaptor, that's a good way to fry the machine altogether. Sometimes overseas airliners have their own electrical outlets, but on 15-hour flights you may want to take multiple batteries to keep your laptop powered.

If you find that you must use an analog narrowband modem to connect to the Internet, be aware that there are 39 different phone jacks in the world. A traveler can carry a digital line tester to check before plugging an analog modem into a digital phone line. Doing so would fry the modem and make the computer inoperable.

Travelers may also want to rent a cell phone that works around the world because it's most likely that the U.S. cell phones they're carrying won't work overseas. You can contact your own cell phone company to check where it will work. GSM phone service is available worldwide, and GSM cell phones are available in dual-band, tri-band, and quad-band models. A dual-band phone (at 900 or 1,800MHz) is fine for service in places such as Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and all of Asia, with the exception of Japan and South Korea. If you need to use the phone in the United States as well as overseas, a tri-band or quad-band GSM phone would be the best choice. Be sure to check with the cell phone carrier to make sure that the phone will be unlocked for the region you're visiting.

Lastly, global positioning system maps can be downloaded on cell phones or purchased in memory card form. With such maps on a phone or handheld GPS device, there's no need to carry a map, says Kanwar Chadha, founder of Sirf Technology. "Whenever I travel to Europe now, I don't even take a paper map," he says.

Tools To Take

IT travelers should make sure they have this equipment when they embark on an overseas business trip.

- Plug converter to adapt 220V to 110V
- Adaptor to convert plug to fit into non-U.S. wall sockets
- Tri-band or quad-band cell phone with service fully unlocked
- Laptop with encryption and only the necessary files onboard
- Wi-Fi and VoIP phone on the laptop

IT departments have to equip business travelers to be productive when they're on the road.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Wide Area Networking Meets Local Instance Networking

Improving Application Delivery & Centralizing Infrastructure

by Chris A. MacKinnon

• • •

ONE OF THE BIGGEST challenges for enterprises that have remote or branch offices is centralizing the control and management of servers and storage while delivering LAN-like application performance to distributed sites. On today's enterprise networks, remote users can run into issues such as bandwidth and latency limitations when trying to access enterprise applications over a WAN.

Many vendors are currently pushing out solutions, trying to improve performance issues; however, one startup vendor is using local instance networking technology to improve application delivery and to help centralize branch office infrastructure. Jeff Aaron, spokesman for Silver Peak Systems, a company that develops enterprise-class network appliances for the recentralization of branch office infrastructure, says local instance networking is the company's innovative approach to better application performance while retaining control centrally, where it belongs.

Among other angles, the company is helping the enterprise to overcome the challenges of server centralization. Aaron says, "The biggest challenge to server centralization is performance. If you place all servers and storage in a central data center, you are subject to the bandwidth and latency limitations of a WAN when delivering applications to remote offices. We address this by enabling all repetitive information to be served locally from the appliance located at the branch office itself, eliminating the need to send this information across the WAN. Even if only part of the information being requested is repetitive, we send just the delta across the WAN. This enables us to provide an order of magnitude performance improvement—anywhere from 10 to 200 times, depending on the application."

Silver Peak's Solution

Silver Peak offers three different appliances for enterprises looking to centralize infrastructures and increase application performance. These NX series appliances work transparently on the network. "The NX series appliances inspect all incoming and outgoing WAN traffic and store a local instance of information in an application independent data store. The local instance is transparently populated based on day-to-day usage, containing a subset of the enterprises working data set that is most relevant to each location," says Aaron.

The appliances examine all outbound WAN packets to see if a match exists in the local instance at the destination location. If there is a match, the repetitive information is not sent across the WAN; instructions are sent to deliver the data locally. If the data has been modified, only the delta is transmitted across the WAN, maximizing bandwidth utilization and application performance.

Silver Peak is the first vendor to offer a network layer solution that is completely transparent to all applications, while addressing the compression, QoS, and latency needs of enterprises, Aaron says. "We are examining byte streams of information as they traverse a network. When we recognize a stream of bytes that has been previously sent across the link and therefore know this information has already been stored on the remove Silver Peak device, we do not resend those bytes across the link. Instead, we simply send a reference to the remote device to the byte stream so the information can be delivered from that device instead of having to resend the information across the WAN."

The Silver Peak NX series appliances are controlled using a Web-based appliance manager, which provides remote device management, network monitoring, and application performance analysis. The appliance manager also simplifies common appliance configuration tasks. A full-featured command line interface is also available via a console serial port and SSH. The appliance manager is accessed via HTTP/HTTPS. Secure logon authentication is handled via RADIUS, TACACS+, or a local database.

Not Application Specific

Silver Peak's technology does not care what application is using those bytes. For example, the same PowerPoint file can be emailed, sent over FTP, and then downloaded via the Web. The technology recognizes the stream of bytes that are in the PowerPoint file as being repetitive regardless of the application used to transport it. The company also uses an innovative technology called network memory technology to perform enterprise-wide local instance networking. Network memory uses patent-pending fingerprinting technology to find matches in byte sequences to avoid sending repetitive data across the WAN link.

Aaron says, "Other solutions only improve the performance of specific applications. For example, WAFS, as the name suggests, only improves the performance of file services. Web caches only improve the performance of Web services. Email acceleration solutions improve the performance of email. On the other hand, it doesn't matter to our technology if the data is sent over a WAN via email, FTP, or downloaded from a file server; we are simply looking at the information itself at the byte level and making decisions as to how best to deliver it."

There are two generations of products that have fallen short of a solution that is completely transparent to all applications. "The first generation of products were designed to improve application delivery leveraged compression and QoS. This improved bandwidth but did not improve latency, which has a major impact on application delivery. They also were designed to improve the performance of a specific WAN link; they were not designed to be a network-wide solution," says Aaron.

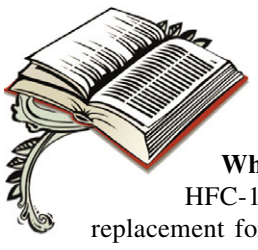
"The next generation of products was designed to accelerate specific applications, such as file, Web/email, or TCP. These are application specific, which leads to costly deployments when multiple applications are deployed (which is always the case). In addition, they are difficult to manage as they require configuration changes to clients, servers, and applications. Also, the benefits are often short lived as applications are constantly evolving," he says.

A Good Future

Forrester Research sees good things ahead for application acceleration technologies such as Silver Peak's. "By 2006, we will see a single market for application acceleration technologies. A lot of vendor activity will characterize the next 18 to 24 months. At the end of that time, we will see a small number of vendors—between five and 10—covering virtually all aspects of application acceleration and dominating the market," says Thomas Mendel, vice president and research director of Forrester's applications and infrastructure group.

Aaron agrees that more vendors are moving toward application acceleration. "Application acceleration is a hot button for most enterprises. Many of the established networking vendors have made acquisitions in this space. Cisco Systems, for example, recently acquired Fineground, an enterprise Web application acceleration provider, and Actona Technologies, a developer of WAFS software. In addition, 80% of enterprises are expected to invest in infrastructure to improve application delivery in 2005, and vendor revenues are expected to exceed $1.5 billion worldwide this year alone."

TWO TERMS



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Why you should care: If your enterprise still uses Halon in its fire suppression system, you'll likely need to update that equipment over the next several years as regulators have mandated removal of Halon systems. Products using HFC-125 or similar technologies will be one of the more likely options because they're proven safe for the environment.

Related products and manufacturers: Fike manufactures systems using HFC-125/FE-25, including the ECARO-25 (Extinguishing Clean Agent Retrofit Option that uses DuPont FE-25 technology). The product can be used for both new installations and as a Halon replacement.

DA (distributed analysis)

What it is: Distributed analysis systems are most often used to monitor server and link performance, track service level agreement quotas, view network bandwidth problems, and search for security threats. Distributed analysis involves placing probes at key points throughout your enterprise's network. These probes send their data back to a central analyzer that lets you analyze the numbers any way you like.

Why you should care: If you're in charge of monitoring your enterprise's network, then distributed analysis is likely the way to go. It'll help you identify intruders and bandwidth hogs and help fix issues with branch offices, among other network problems.

Related products and manufacturers: The market is full of competitors in this field, including Fluke Networks' SuperAgent, Network Instruments' Observer, and Network General's Sniffer.

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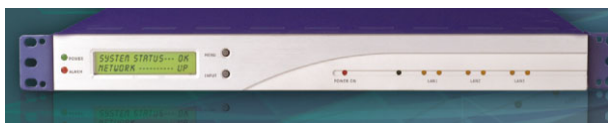

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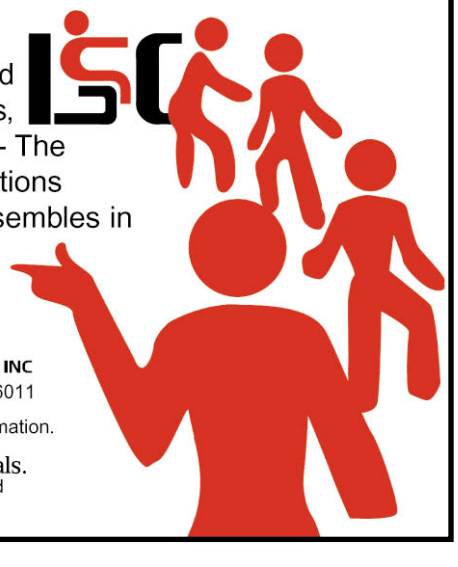

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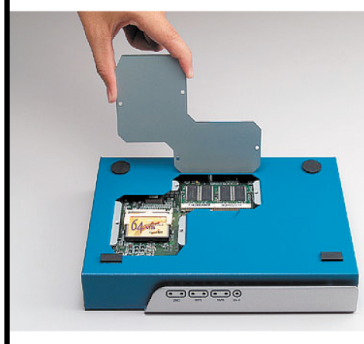

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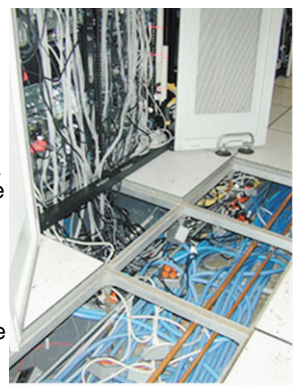

RPDU Power Distribution

Installation time: Conventional wiring could take several days to complete, while the RPDU power distribution can be available within a few hours due to the simplicity of the installation.

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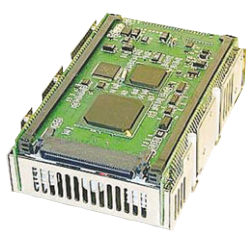

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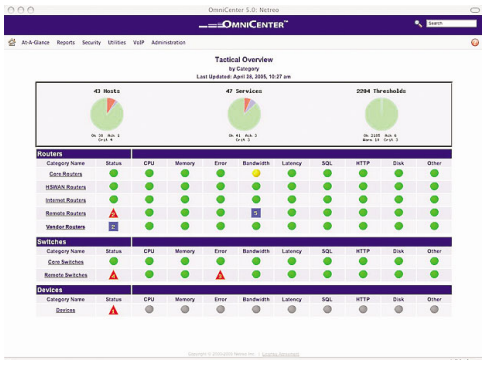

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Have you ever been asked to find emails only to discover that hundreds of .pst files are scattered all over the company, have been deleted or corrupted? If you were trying to find email business records, or dispose of them for compliance, then you are in for a major challenge.

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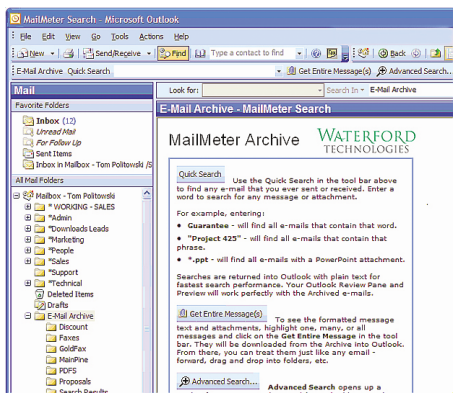
Email users build up files and need more space, yet after a certain space limitation, you would have to pay a lot more user license fees. So each user must stay within their quota. The end result is that they create .pst files that cause more risks and problems in the long run.



Mail Server Performance and Backup Problems?

Your mail server was designed as an application server, not as a storage system. When it gets too big performance takes a big hit. Nightly backups can take so long that they can no longer be performed nightly.

The MailMeter Solution

When you implement an email archiving solution, all of these email storage, performance and retrieval problems are resolved. Email is offloaded from the active mail store to a separate database, indexed, compressed and encrypted. An email archiving solution, such as Waterford Technologies' MailMeter Archive, can resolve these email issues and more:

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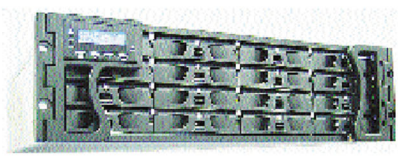

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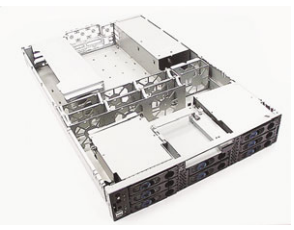

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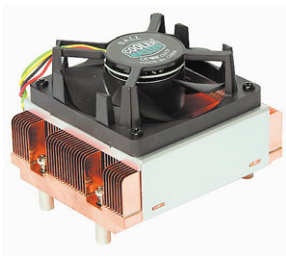

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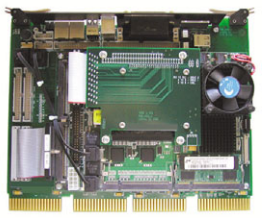

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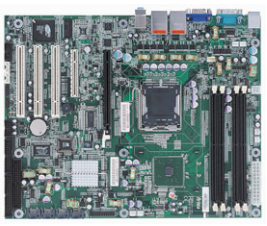

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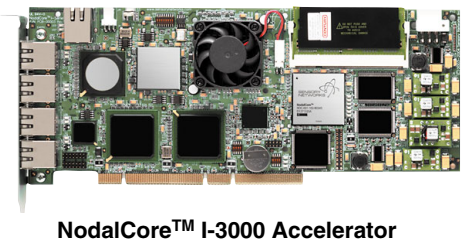

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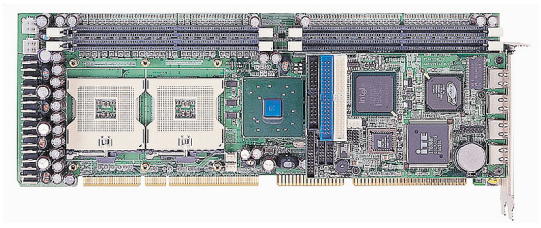

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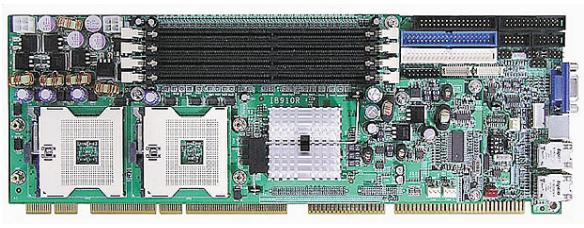

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- Lowest profile for easy operator viewing
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- Multiple-tier options for vertical expansion
- Superb wire management throughout console interior
- TruForm work surfaces and side panels in multiple color options

General Description
The system shall be comprised of floor mounted base module below the work surface with a minimum of 14" (8U) rack space per module. Top 21" (12U) slope modules or LCD monitor pivot mounts above the work surface, assembled together to form an operator work station. Two removable rear panels with 1/2", 3/4",1", and 1-1/2" NEMA custom knockouts & a open base for power & cabling. The system shall have a minimum 1-1/8" (29mm) thick MDF core with PVC covering the entire substraight to create a TruForm work surface. The work surface shall be not less than 15" (381mm) deep overall and shall have a 1-3/4" (44mm) beveled edge along the entire front width.

Module upper section shall allow for a minimum slope of 33º away from the operator for all electronics placed above 19-3/4" (502mm). The sloping module shall accommodate LCD or CRT monitors in a 21" (12U) maximum rack height. Add-on-top modules shall allow for a vertical or a tilt of 27º towards the user of all electronics placed above 38-1/4" (972mm) height from floor level.
Top modules shall be provided with removable equipment finishing masks, where required, and cut to the face size of the specified electronics.

Steel Exterior Finishing Panels
Exterior steel finishing panels shall be a minimum of 20 gauge (.035) sheet metal and attached to the self supporting superstructure framework. All fastening to be unseen from external view.
Side and top finishing panels shall be either slide on, lift off or bolt on type to facilitate ease of access for servicing and shall not require any further mechanical support to provide a secure connection to the system.
Steel or wood finishing panels may be applied following final termination test and commissioning of the specified electronics or earlier as directed, to facilitate a timely and efficient installation and to minimize potential damage to the exterior of the system by others.

Finish and Color
All exterior and frame steel components including drawers, blank panels and shelving shall have a pre-finish of zinc oxide wash primer with a baked black powder coat paint finish of the following specifications.
Self supporting frames and work surface supports are to be supplied in the following color: HBT4-20007 Black.
Side, top, and rear panels, drawers, shelving, and blank filler panels are to be in the following color: HBT4-20007 Black.
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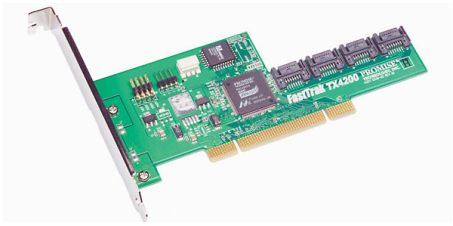

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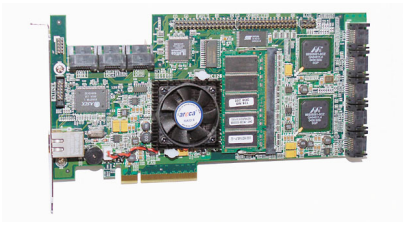

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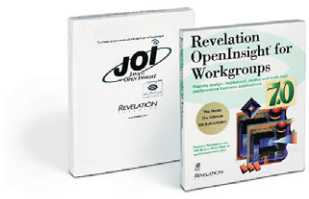

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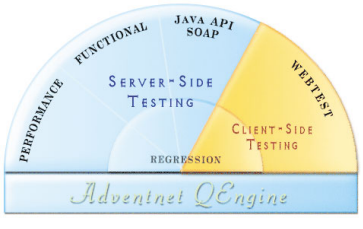

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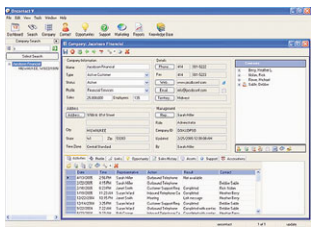

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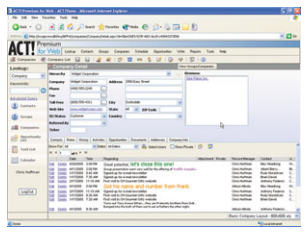

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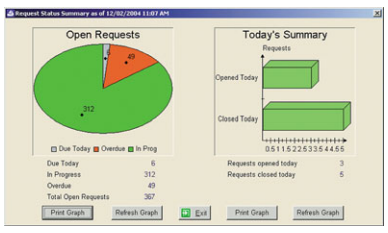

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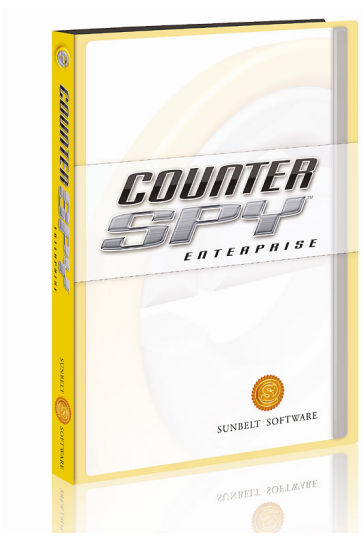

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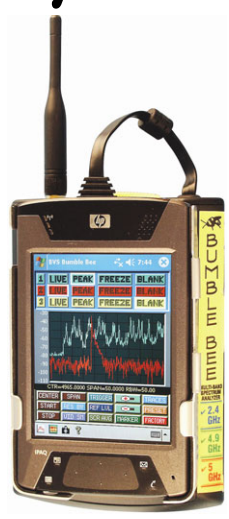

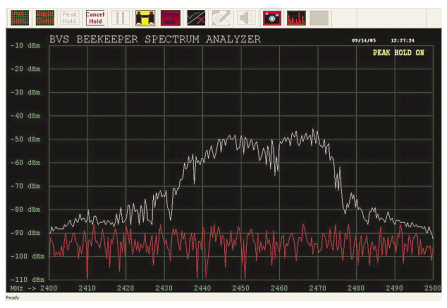

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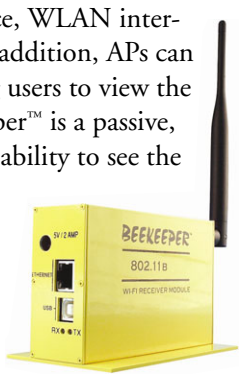

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Sound familiar? Network monitoring used to be so simple. If there was a problem in the network, all one needed to do was to plug a sniffer into a data port of a hub. A sniffer (or protocol analyzer) is something that every network engineer needs. However it is similar to having a fire extinguisher, the perfect tool for an emergency, yet spending most of its life offline, just standing by. Whenever an emergency arises, it would be hand carried to the trouble spot. And when the problem is resolved, it would be returned to the closet to await the next fire.

Today, monitoring is much more than protocol analysis. Security is a big reason for "out-of-band" monitoring. Not only does the network need to keep the bad guys from attacking from the outside, but also to keep important and confidential information from leaking from the inside. Unlike a sniffer, however, these security tools (e.g., IDS or Intrusion Detection Systems) require reliable and 24/7 access to the production traffic.

With Sarbanes-Oxley requirements (or similarly with HIPPA), compliance monitoring becomes as important as security. Monitoring tools such as forensic data recorders or database transaction auditors are as mission critical as IDS. Clearly there are incentives for performing proactive monitoring because while failure to protect against intrusion means loss of revenue, failure to comply could mean jail time for the CEO.

At the same time, performance monitoring has evolved, it is now about application and not just protocol. Application Performance Monitoring, either to monitor performance of enterprise software applications (CRM, etc.) or to monitor performance and quality of VoIP calls within an enterprise (or to provide ability for Legal Intercept as demanded by government agencies) has become a fast growing business.

Together these are the 3 P's driving the needs for networking monitoring (P for Performance, P for Protection and P for Proactive).

On the other hand, networks are no longer flat. Hubs have all but gone away and are replaced by Layer 2/3 switches. Traffic is no longer replicated in every data port. Instead, they traverse in point-to-point paths. This change in architecture has dramatically improved the throughput and the bandwidth utilization. However, it has taken away network visibility. We can no longer just plug a tool into a hub and expect to see every packet. Instead we now rely on SPAN port (or mirroring port) which would replicate incoming or outgoing traffic on a particular port or packets belonging to a particular VLAN on a switch. And there are a limited number of SPAN ports available (typically one, two at most).

So competition for SPAN ports in a typical enterprise environment is not only real, it is counterproductive. And it is becoming difficult for us to do their job, for the IT team who is interested in Performance, the security team who is responsible for Protection, or the compliance team who has been asked to be Proactive.

And the problem has become worse as mission critical networks become redundant, tiered and fully meshed. Not only are there too many tools, there are now too many links. In other words, we must now monitor traffic that doesn't even follow a single deterministic path.

To do our job, we must aggregate packets from multiple sources such that we can reconstruct an "end-to-end" view in the case where there are asymmetric routes, load-balanced or fault tolerant redundant links, or a "big pipe" view where we have deployed trunk links to increase throughput between two switches.

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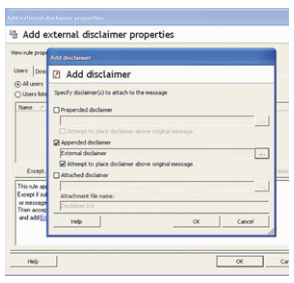

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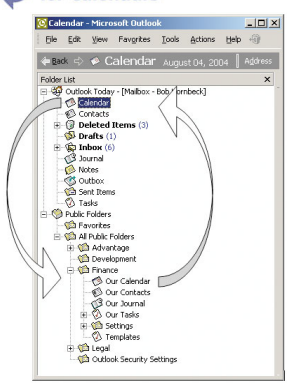

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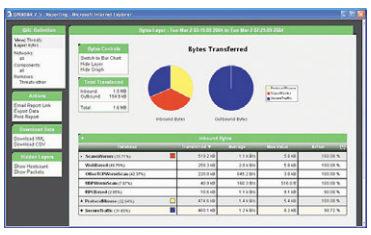

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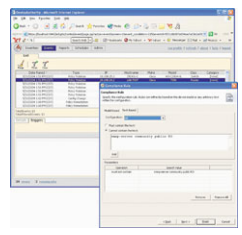

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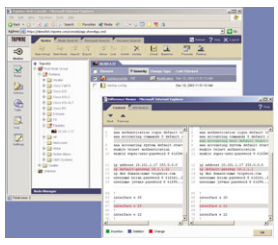

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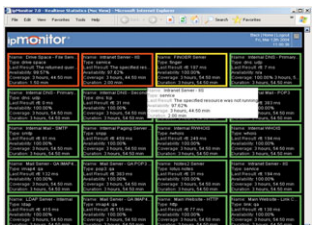

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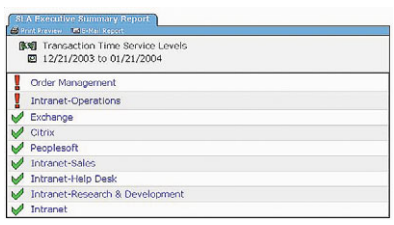

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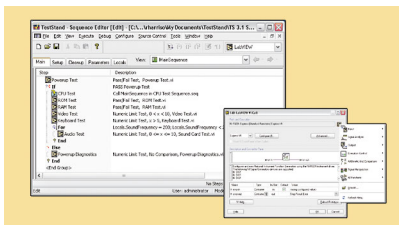

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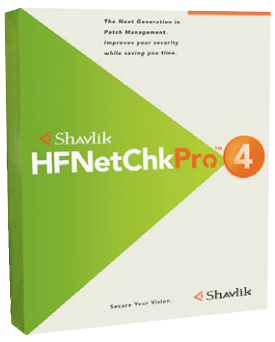

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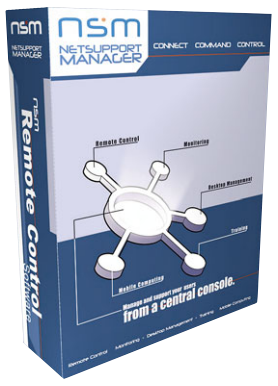

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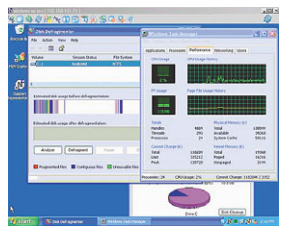

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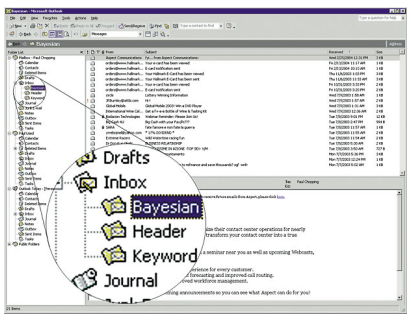
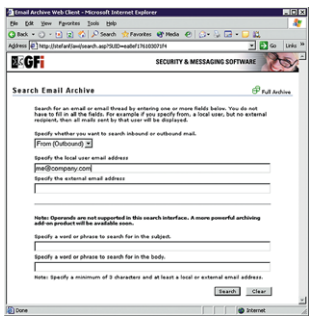


Users can review spam mail



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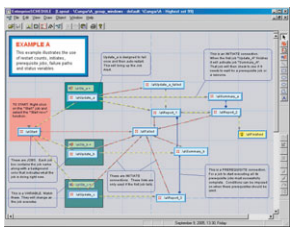

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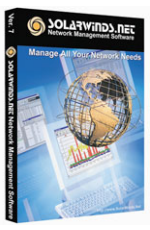

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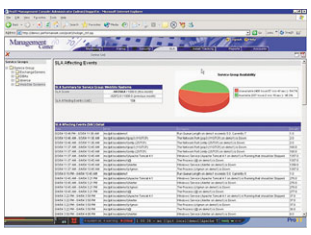

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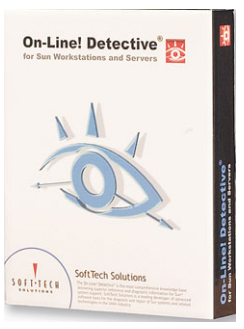

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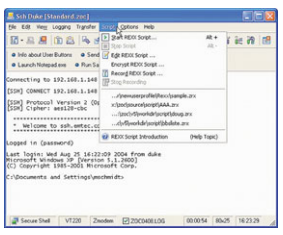

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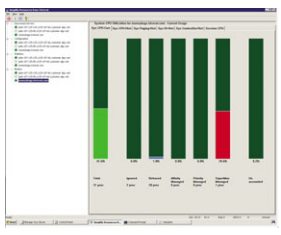

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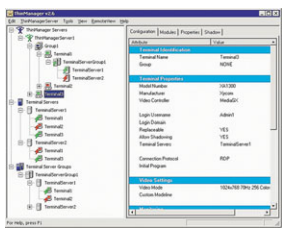

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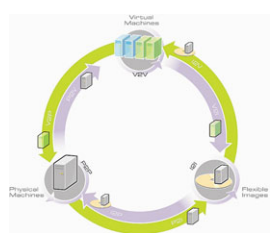

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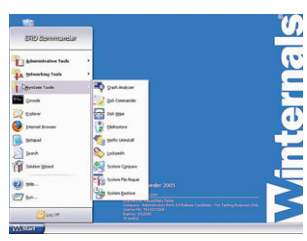

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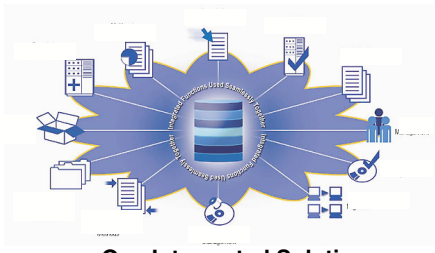

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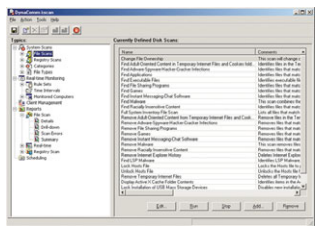

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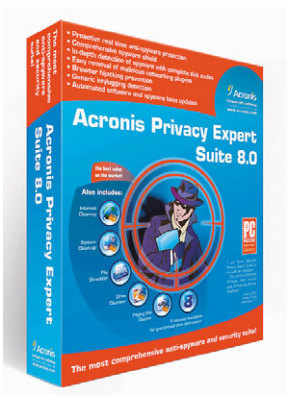

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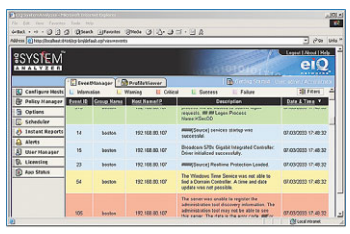

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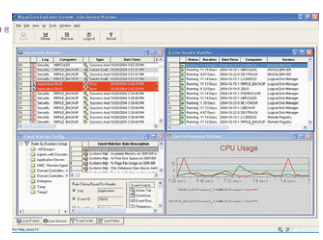

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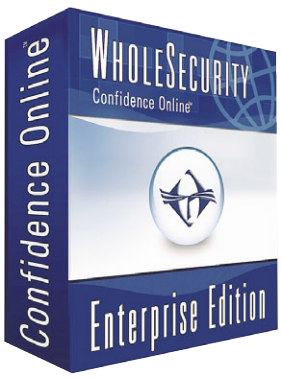

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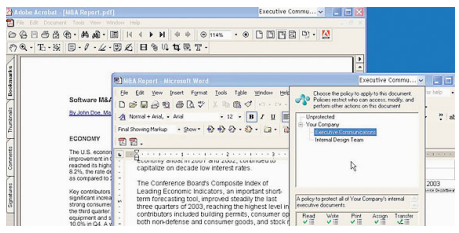

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When compared with other monitoring alternatives, the Falcon provides unmatched value, convenience, capability, flexibility, and expandability.
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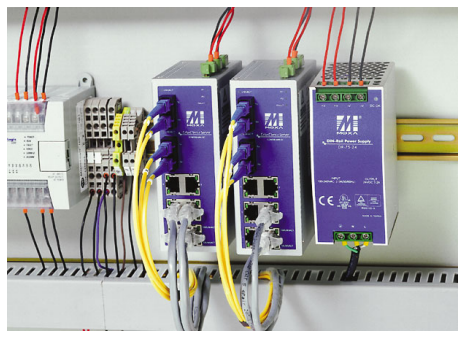

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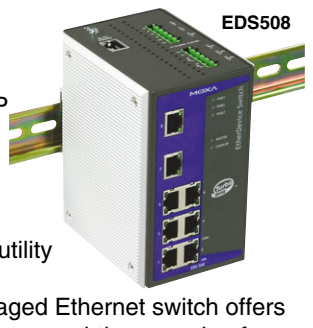

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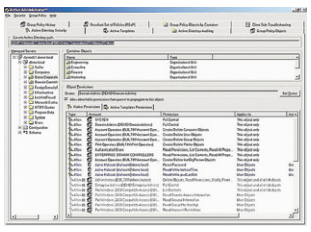
Active Administrator



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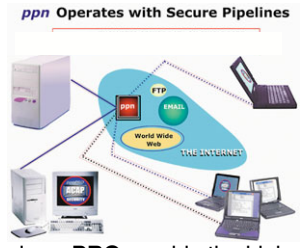

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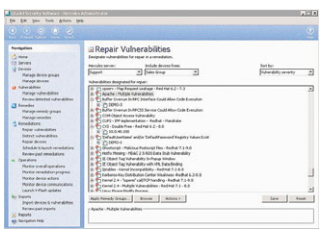

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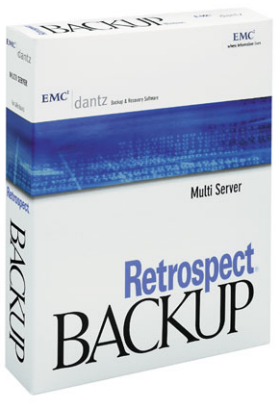

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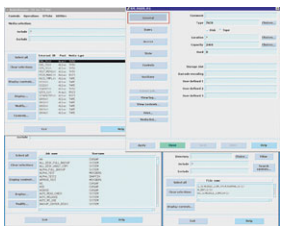

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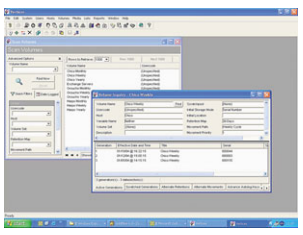

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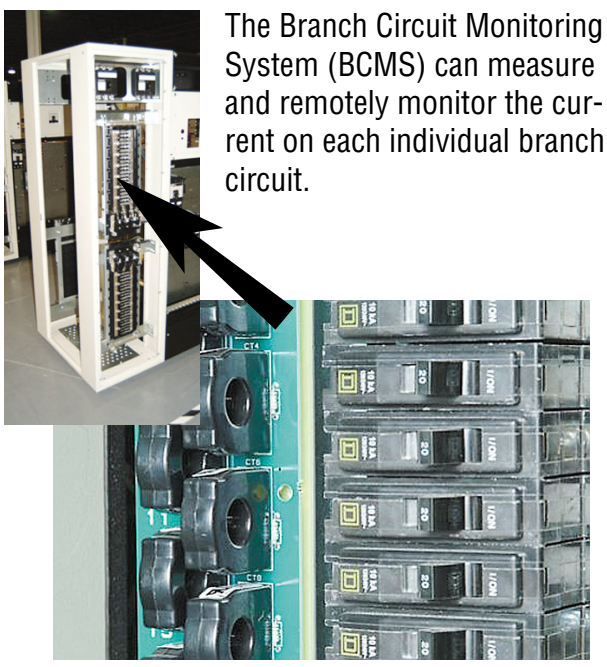

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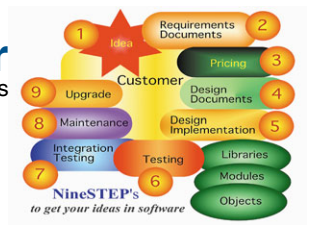

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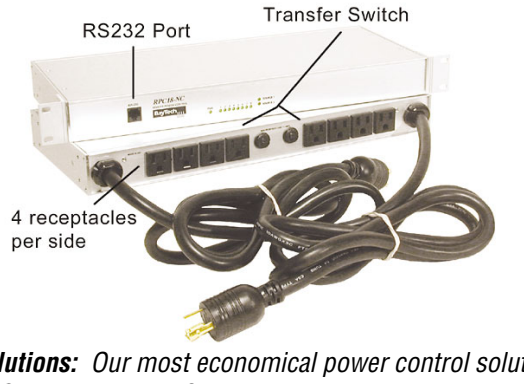

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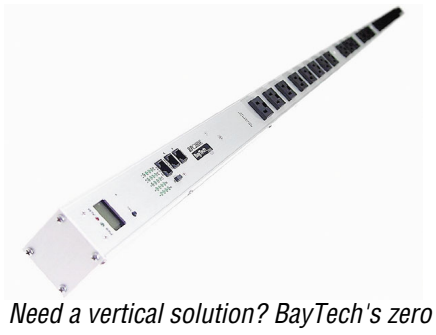

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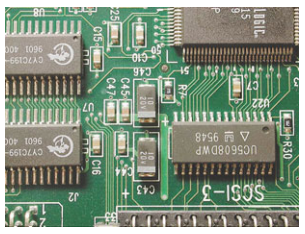

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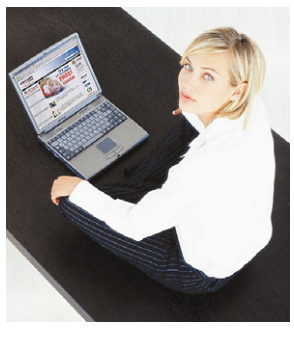

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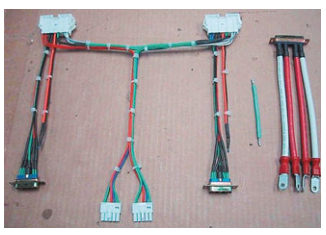

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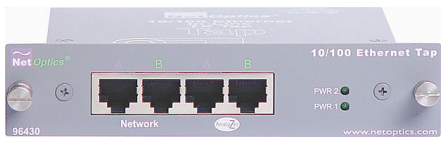

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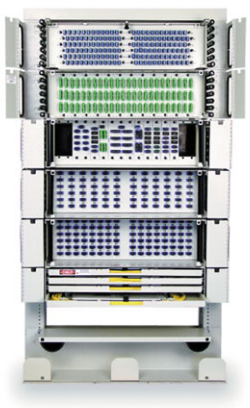

APA Cables & Networks' (APACN) F23 Fiber Distribution System (FDS) is engineered for broadband and enterprise connectivity applications. The FDS consists of termination and splice panels, frames and accessories. The FDS is designed to reduce risk of post installation damage, lower maintenance cost and enhance system life. The F23 144 port fiber panel offers the highest port density in the smallest footprint available.

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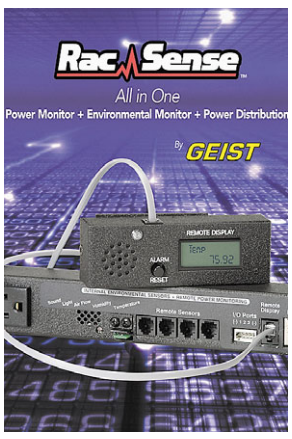

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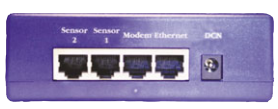

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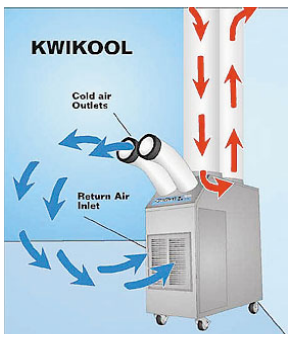

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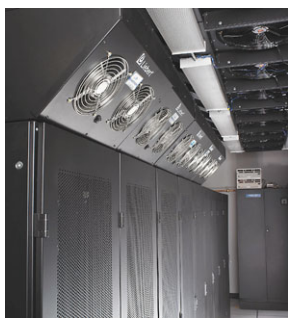

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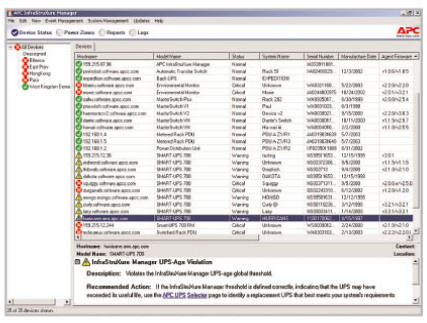

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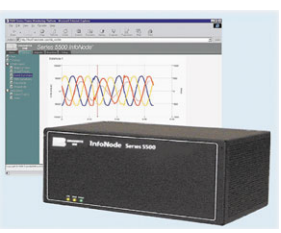

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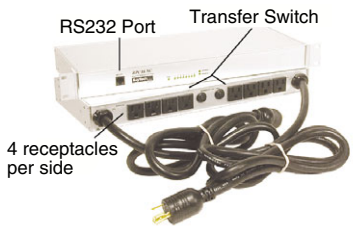

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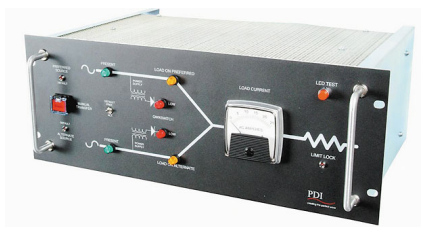

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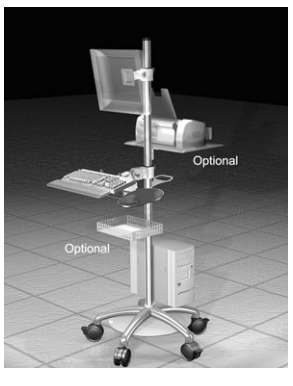

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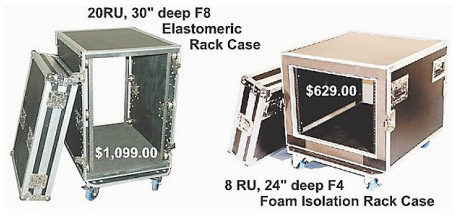

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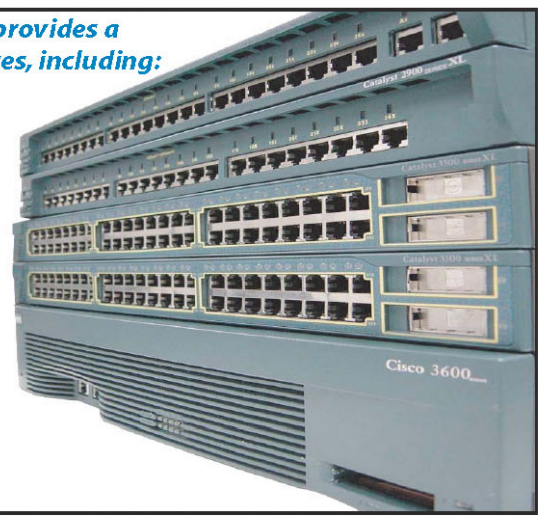

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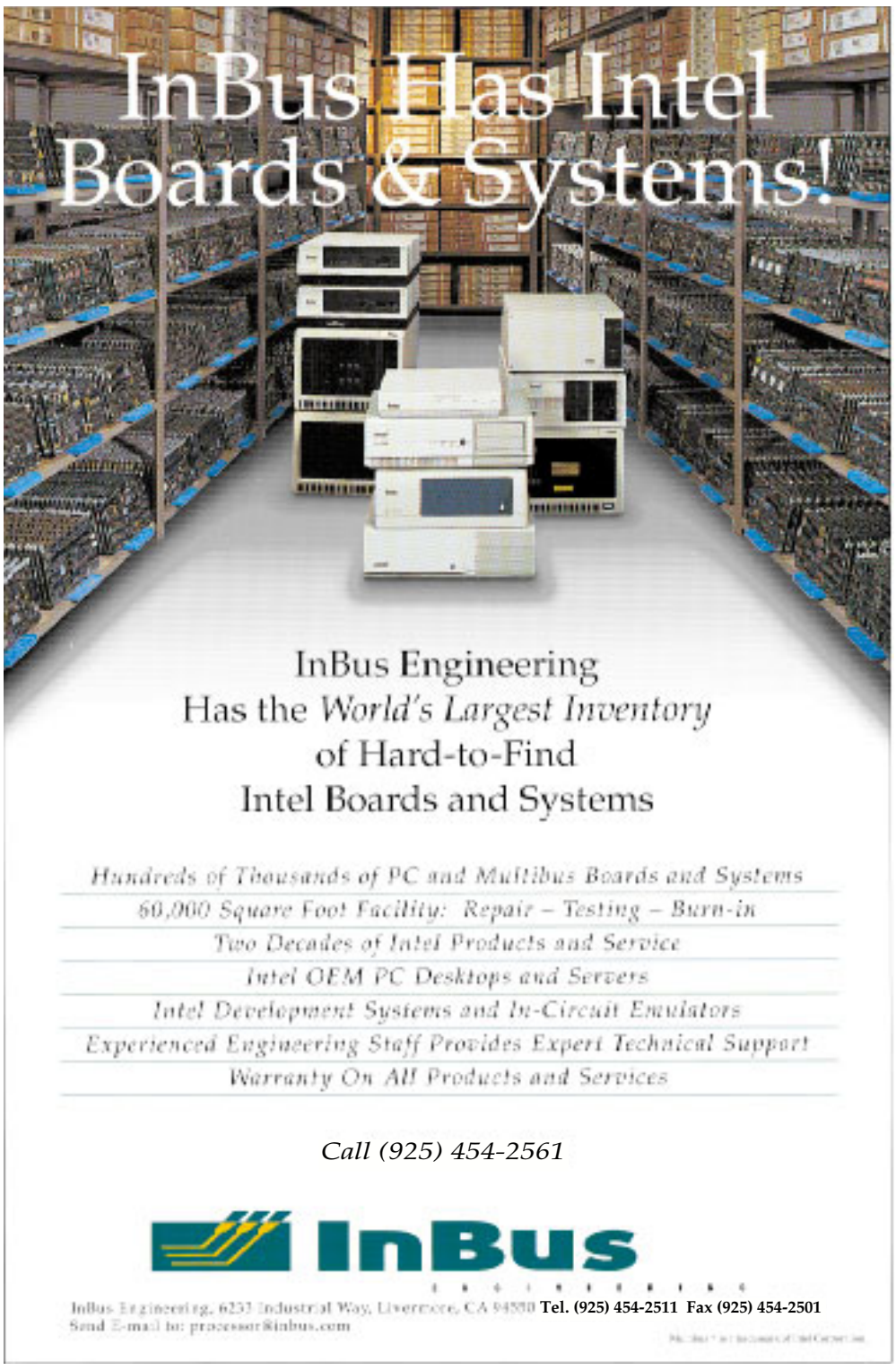

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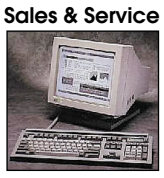

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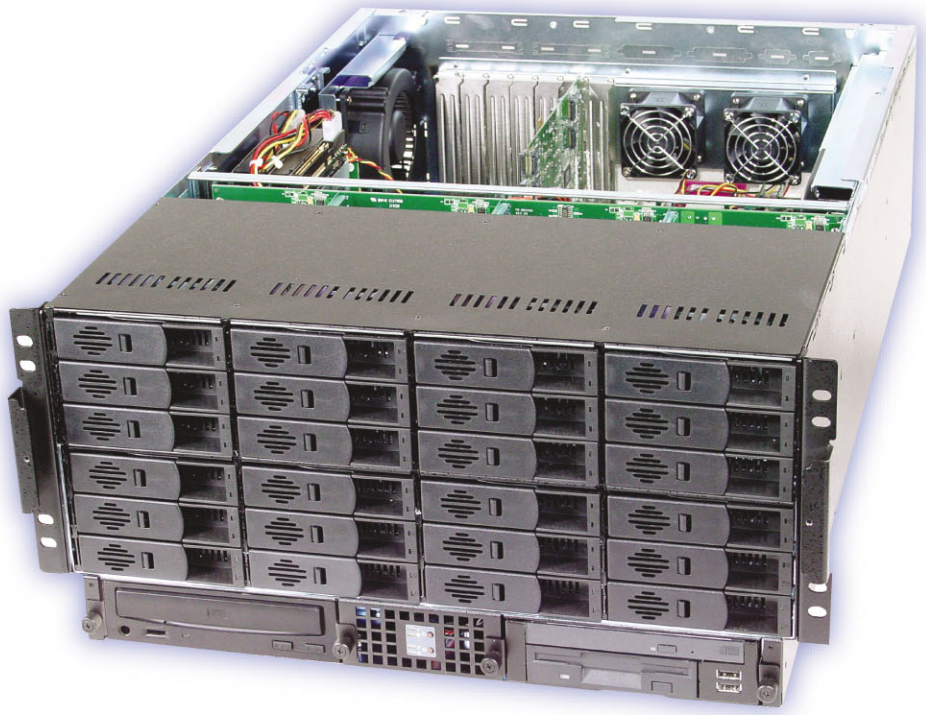

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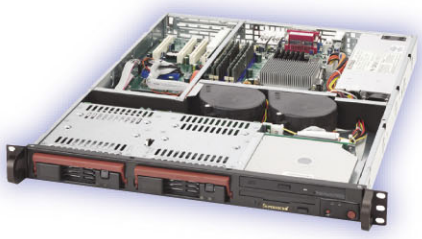

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